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SELECTIONS

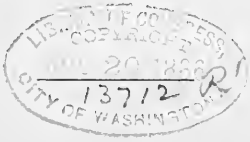
FROM THE

WRITINGS OF GEORGE BANCROFT,

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

FOR HIGH SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, AND READING CIRCLES.

By W. W. GIST.



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PREFACE.

Our greatest historian has kindly given me permission to prepare a volume of selections that will illustrate his literary style. These extracts will certainly show that the facts of history may be presented in the most beautiful rhetoric.

W. W. G.

Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, May, 1886.

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GEORGE BANCROFT.

George Bancroft is the Nestor of American men of letters. Born October 3, 1800, he received his early training at Exeter Academy and graduated at Harvard in 1817. He is now eighty-six years old and his life has touched every administration except Washington's. What mighty changes have been wrought in the land since George Bancroft, a manly youth, stepped forth from his *alma mater* a full-fledged graduate! Two generations have passed away and a third is now on the stage of action. Webster, Clay, Calhoun, and Benton had not yet reached the zenith of their power. These men have passed away, and another group, equally great, of whom Abraham Lincoln was the central figure, became conspicuous leaders in the most thrilling period of our history, and have passed away likewise. Indeed there are thousands of voters to-day who were born during the exciting events of Lincoln's administration. At the time George Bancroft graduated, which, in the general acceptation of the term, marked the commencement of his life's work, Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, Blaine, Cleveland, and Generals Sherman and Sheridan had not been born. Some of these have won never fading honors in events that have attracted the attention of the whole world, and are numbered among our heroes. At that time Harvard was a very different institution from what it is now; American literature was in its infancy; Washington Irving had scarcely gained a recognition on the other side of the waters.

Forty-seven years ago Bancroft held a government office, and secured for Nathaniel Hawthorne an appointment in the Boston custom house. Hawthorne was then a literary man with some reputation, but his pen did not afford him a livelihood. His great masterpieces were written during the next quarter of a century, and twenty-two years have passed since the announcement of his death cast a gloom over the literary world, while his friend and benefactor still survives in the full vigor of his intellectual powers.

Macaulay and Bancroft were born in the same year; the former has been dead nearly twenty-seven years; the latter is giving finishing touches to his great history, which merits a place with Macaulay's and Gibbon's.

George Bancroft's father was the Rev. Aaron Bancroft, D.D., who as a young man participated in the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill, and who in later years won an honorable name as a theologian and man of letters, his "Life of Washington" attracting considerable attention in Europe. The son inherited many of the admirable characteristics of the father.

After his graduation at Harvard, George Bancroft spent five years in Europe, receiving a degree from the University of Göttingen, mastering the principal modern languages, giving special attention to the study of history, visiting the most important nations of the continent, and above all communing with some of the greatest minds of the age. It was his rare privilege to meet and to enjoy the friendship of such men as Wolf, the distinguished classic scholar, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Goethe, Cousin, Alexander von Humboldt, Chevalier Bunsen, Niebuhr, and others scarcely less distinguished.

Returning to his native land in 1822, he spent one year as tutor of Greek in Harvard, and afterward assisted in establishing a preparatory school at Northampton.

One of his pupils at the latter place was John Lothrop Motley. The subject of United States history already absorbed Bancroft's mind, and the next few years were spent in special study for his great work.

Bancroft has held a number of offices, although he has not been conspicuous as a politician. In 1838 President Van Buren appointed him collector at the port of Boston, and he discharged the duties of the office with marked ability. In 1845 he entered President Polk's cabinet as Secretary of the Navy. A number of important events of this administration are linked with his name. Through his influence the naval academy at Annapolis was established, and he introduced many needed reforms into the naval service. He ordered the United States fleet to assist Captain Fremont in taking possession of California, and as Acting Secretary of War he issued orders for the United States army to march into Texas at the commencement of the Mexican War. In 1846 he was appointed minister to England, and held the position for three years. While in England unusual courtesies were extended to him, and every facility was granted for carrying on historical researches, official state papers and many valuable private libraries being accessible. He also visited Paris for the purpose of study, and received valuable assistance from Guizot and Lamartine. In 1867 he was appointed minister to Berlin, and remained abroad a number of years, calling forth a special commendation from President Grant for his wise diplomatic services.

Mr. Bancroft has done considerable literary work in addition to writing his "History of the United States." When a young man he published a volume of poems; he has contributed a great many articles to magazines, and has delivered a number of memorial addresses on prominent Americans. In 1859 he prepared a paper on Prescott for the New York Historical Society; also one

on Washington Irving. In 1860 he delivered an address in Cleveland at the unveiling of the statue of Commodore Oliver H. Perry, and February 12, 1866, he delivered before the two houses of Congress a memorial address on President Lincoln.

Bancroft is known most widely, however, as a historian, and his noble history is a monument more durable than granite. He brought to his task a mind philosophic in character, broad in grasp, impartial in judgment, believing firmly in God's superintending care, rich in scholarship, and with enough of the imaginative and poetical to quicken and vivify all his intellectual powers. He has bestowed nearly sixty years of conscientious labor on this great historical work, the first volume of which appeared in 1834.

The historian requires peculiar talent for his work. He must have such patience and energy as will enable him to carry on any research that will throw light on the subject he is investigating; he must weigh all evidence as coolly as the most unprejudiced judge; he must not assume the part of an advocate until he has examined the subject from every standpoint and reached an unbiased conclusion; he must grasp the real ideas and principles that underlie the events and hasten the progress of civilization; he must have sufficient imagination to see the events as real, and to make his readers see them as such; in addition he must have a copiousness of illustration and a fluency of language that will enable him to present his subject in an attractive form. In short, he must be a scholar, an explorer, a philosopher, and a rhetorician. Few, if any, have possessed all these qualifications in a preëminent degree; Bancroft certainly possesses them all in no small degree.

Gibbon will doubtless ever hold an honorable place as a historical writer; and yet he attempts to account for

the rapid spread of Christianity entirely on human grounds, and refuses to recognize the greatest force then at work in effecting changes among the nations of the world. Macaulay well says of Gibbon: "He writes like a man who had received some personal injury from Christianity, and wished to be revenged on it and all its possessors." No such charge can be made against George Bancroft. He is a firm believer in God, recognizes Christianity as the most powerful factor in the progress of civilization, and continually evinces his unfaltering belief in God's superintending care over human affairs. The opening paragraph of his address on President Lincoln may be taken as his creed on God in history. Notice how clear his statement and how triumphant his faith:

"That God rules in the affairs of men is as certain as any truth in physical science. On the great moving power which is from the beginning hangs the world of the senses and the world of thought and action. Eternal wisdom marshals the great procession of the nations, working in patient continuity through the ages, never halting and never abrupt, encompassing all events in its oversight, and ever effecting its will, though mortals may slumber in apathy or oppose with madness. Kings are lifted up or thrown down, nations come and go, republics flourish and wither, dynasties pass away as a tale that is told; but nothing is by chance, though men, in their ignorance of causes, may think so. The deeds of time are governed, as well as judged, by the decrees of eternity."

In a recent private letter to Dr. Buckley, of the *Christian Advocate*, Bancroft uses these words quoted in that paper:

"Certainly our great united commonwealth is the child of Christianity; it may with equal truth be asserted that modern civilization sprang into life with our relig-

ion; and faith in its principles is the life boat on which humanity has at divers times escaped the most threatening perils."

But it is not necessary to multiply quotations illustrative of his faith in the Deity. Throughout the whole of his writings he manifests a devout, reverential state of mind, and keeps constantly before the reader the idea that God is the great power back of those mighty movements that stir the nations of the world.

The philosophic cast of his mind is clearly revealed in all his discussions of causes and results. He firmly believes that "the problems of politics cannot be solved without passing behind transient forms to efficient causes," and he ever seeks to find the real origin of an event. He dates the American Revolution back to the Reformation under Luther and Calvin, and in relating the events that led to a separation from the mother country, he discusses with great clearness and elaborateness three points essential to the proper understanding of the subject. In the first place, he speaks of the emancipation of the mind at the Reformation, and the consequent birth of the idea of freedom. In the second place, he discusses the growth of this idea of freedom in the nations of Europe and on this continent. In the third place, he describes with wonderful fairness the violent discussions that arose in England and in this country when the colonists raised a protest against the tyrannies of the mother country.

While the rhetoric of Bancroft is not faultless, it certainly deserves a place in our classic English. In the discussion of grave and philosophical questions, his stateliness of expression and his dignity of style challenge our admiration. His descriptions are very fine, and suggest a mind keenly alive to the beautiful and the poetical; but they do not reveal that spontaneity so

characteristic of Irving, nor that indefinable symmetry so noticeable in Hawthorne. If his style is sometimes declamatory, I think it is generally in a connection such that the cultivated taste will pronounce it admissible.

Thoroughly versed in the historic lore of this and other countries, broad in his general scholarship, remarkably free from prejudice, an uncompromising American, and yet not an American in a narrow and bigoted sense, careful and systematic in his methods of labor and recreation, unswerving in his belief in the superintending providence of God, George Bancroft justly merits the high place of honor and esteem so willingly accorded to him, and his noble example should be a never failing source of inspiration.

NOTE.—The substance of the biographical sketch of Bancroft appeared in the *Chautauquan* for June, 1885.

WRITINGS OF GEORGE BANCROFT.

SELECTION I.

TRIBUTE TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

Go forth, then, language of Milton and Hampden, language of my country, take possession of the North American continent! Gladden the waste places with every tone that has been rightly struck on the English lyre, with every English word that has been spoken well for liberty and for man! Give an echo to the now silent and solitary mountains; gush out with the fountains that as yet sing their anthems all day long without response; fill the valleys with the voices of love in its purity, the pledges of friendship in its faithfulness; and as the morning sun drinks the dewdrops from the flowers all the way from the dreary Atlantic to the Peaceful Ocean, meet him with the joyous hum of the early industry of freemen! Utter boldly and spread widely through the world the thoughts of the coming apostles of the people's liberty, till the sound that cheers the desert shall thrill through the heart of humanity, and the lips of the messenger of the people's power, as he stands in beauty upon the mountains, shall proclaim the renovating tidings of equal freedom for the race!—*Hist. Vol. III., 302.*

SELECTION II.

DESCRIPTION OF COLONIAL VIRGINIA.

The genial climate and transparent atmosphere delighted those who had come from the denser air of

England. Every object in nature was new and wonderful. The loud and frequent thunderstorms were phenomena that had been rarely witnessed in the colder summers of the north; the forests, majestic in their growth, and free from underwood, deserved admiration for their unrivaled magnificence; purling streams and frequent rivers, flowing between alluvial banks, quickened the ever pregnant soil into an unwearied fertility; strange and delicate flowers grew familiarly in the fields; the woods were replenished with sweet barks and odors; the gardens matured the fruits of Europe, of which the growth was invigorated and the flavor improved by the virgin mold. Especially the birds, with their gay plumage and varied melodies, inspired delight; every traveler expressed his pleasure in listening to the mocking bird, which caroled a thousand several tunes, imitating and excelling the notes of all its rivals. The humming bird, so brilliant in its plumage, and so delicate in its form, quick in motion, yet not fearing the presence of man, haunting the flowers like the bee gathering honey, rebounding from the blossoms into which it dips its bill, and as soon returning "to renew its many addresses to its delightful objects," was ever admired as the smallest and the most beautiful of the feathered race. The rattlesnake, with the terrors of its alarms and the power of its venom; the opossum, soon to become as celebrated for the care of its offspring as the fabled pelican; the noisy frog, booming from the shallows like the English bittern; the flying squirrel; the myriads of pigeons, darkening the air with the immensity of their flocks, and, as men believed, breaking with their weight the boughs of trees on which they alighted, were all honored with frequent commemoration, and became the subjects of the strangest tales. The concurrent relation of Indians justified the belief that within ten days' journey to-

ward the setting of the sun, there was a country where gold might be washed from the sand, and where the natives had learned the use of the crucible, but inquiry was always baffled, and the regions of gold remained for two centuries undiscovered.— *Vol. I., Page 175.*

SELECTION III.

THE PILGRIMS.

Who will venture to measure the consequence of actions by the humility or the remoteness of their origin? The Power which enchains the destinies of states, overruling the decisions of sovereigns and the forethought of statesmen, often deduces the greatest events from the least considered causes. A Genoese adventurer, discovering America, changed the commerce of the world; an obscure German, inventing the printing press, rendered possible the universal diffusion of increased intelligence; an Augustine monk, denouncing the indulgences, introduced a schism in religion, and changed the foundations of European politics; a young French refugee, skilled alike in theology and civil law, in the duties of magistrates and the dialects of religious controversy, entering the republic of Geneva, and conforming its ecclesiastical discipline to the principles of republican simplicity, established a party of which Englishmen became members, and New England the asylum. The enfranchisement of the mind from religious despotism led directly to inquiries into the nature of civil government, and the doctrines of popular liberty, which sheltered their infancy in the wilderness of the newly discovered continent, within the short space of two centuries have infused themselves into the life blood of every rising state from Labrador to Chili; have erected outposts on

the Oregon and in Liberia; and, making a proselyte of enlightened France, have disturbed all the ancient governments of Europe, by awakening the public mind to resistless action from the shores of Portugal to the palaces of the czars.— *Vol. I., Page 203.*

SELECTION IV.

THE REFORMATION.

In Germany the Reformation sprung not from the superior authority of the sovereign, but from a peasant-born man of the people, and aimed at a regeneration both in morals and doctrine. When Martin Luther proclaimed that justification is by faith alone, superstition was at one blow cut up by the roots. The supernatural charm which hung over the order which had, or whose chief had, time out of mind, usurped the exclusive right to absolve from sin and to interpose themselves between man and God, was dissolved. Every man became his own priest, and was directly in the hands of the Almighty, with no other mediator than the Eternal Wisdom, with no absolution for evil deeds but by repentance and a new life. There could be no higher expression of the liberty of the individual over against his fellow men. The claim of right to the freedom of private judgment is a feeble and partial statement in comparison, for it declares the individual man under God alone, not the keeper of his judgment only, but independent of pope, bishop, priest, and all others of his kind, the keeper of his reason, affections, conscience, and character,— in a word, of his whole being, now and hereafter. Therefore it is that, in an age when political questions were enounced in theological forms, justification by faith

alone was the inscription on the gate through which the more advanced of the human race were to pass to freedom.— *Vol. I., Page 210.*

SELECTION V.

LUTHER AND CALVIN.

Both Luther and Calvin brought the individual into immediate relation with God; but Calvin, under a more stern and militant form of doctrine, lifted the individual above pope and prelate and priest and presbyter, above Catholic church and national church and general synod, above indulgences, remissions, and absolutions from fellow mortals, and brought him into the immediate dependence on God, whose eternal, irreversible choice is made by Himself alone, not arbitrarily, but according to His own highest wisdom and justice. Luther spared the altar, and hesitated to deny totally the real presence; Calvin, with superior dialectics, accepted, as a commemoration and a seal, the rite which the Catholics revered as a sacrifice. Luther favored magnificence in public worship as an aid to devotion; Calvin, the guide of republics, avoided in their churches all appeals to the senses, as a peril to pure religion. Luther condemned the Roman church for its immorality; Calvin, for its idolatry. Luther exposed the folly of superstition, ridiculed the hair shirt and the scourge, the purchased indulgence, and dearly bought, worthless masses for the dead; Calvin shrunk from their criminality with impatient horror. Luther permitted the cross and the taper, pictures and images, as things of indifference; Calvin demanded a spiritual worship in its utmost purity. Luther left the organization of the church to princes and governments; Calvin reformed doctrine, ritual, and practice, and by establish-

ing ruling elders in each church, and an elective synod, he secured to his polity a representative character, which combined authority with popular rights.

Both Luther and Calvin insisted that, for each one, there is and can be no other priest than himself; and, as a consequence, both agreed in the parity of the clergy. Both were of one mind, that, should pious laymen choose one of their number to be their minister, "the man so chosen would be as truly a priest as if all the bishops in the world had consecrated him."— *Vol. I., Page 212.*

SELECTION VI.

ROGER WILLIAMS.

At a time when Germany was desolated by the implacable wars of religion; when even Holland could not pacify vengeful sects; when France was still to go through the fearful struggle with bigotry; when England was gasping under the despotism of intolerance; almost half a century before William Penn became an American proprietary, and two years before Descartes founded modern philosophy on the method of free reflection, Roger Williams asserted the great doctrine of intellectual liberty. It became his glory to found a state upon that principle, and to stamp himself upon its rising institutions in characters so deep that the impress has remained to the present day, and can never be erased without the total destruction of the work. The principles which he first sustained amidst the bickerings of a colonial parish, next asserted in the general court of Massachusetts, and then introduced into the wilds on Narragansett Bay, he soon found occasion to publish to the world, and to defend as the basis of the religious freedom of mankind, so that, borrowing the rhetoric employed by his antagonist in derision, we may

compare him to the lark, the pleasant bird of the peaceful summer, that, "affecting to soar aloft, springs upward from the ground, takes his rise from pale to tree," and at last, surmounting the highest hills, utters his clear carols through the skies of morning. He was the first person in modern Christendom to assert in its plenitude the doctrine of the liberty of conscience, the equality of opinions before the law; and in its defense he was the harbinger of Milton, the precursor and the superior of Jeremy Taylor. For Taylor limited his toleration to a few Christian sects; the philanthropy of Williams compassed the earth. Taylor favored partial reform, commended lenity, argued for forbearance, and entered a special plea in behalf of each tolerable sect; Williams would permit persecution of no opinion, of no religion, leaving heresy unharmed by law, and orthodoxy unprotected by the terrors of penal statutes. Taylor clung to the necessity of positive regulations enforcing religion and eradicating error — like the poets, who first declare their hero to be invulnerable, and then clothe him in earthly armor; Williams was willing to leave Truth alone in her own panoply of light, believing that if in the ancient feud between Truth and Error the employment of force could be entirely abrogated, Truth would have much the best of the bargain.

It is the custom of mankind to award high honors to the successful inquirer into the laws of nature, to those who advance the bounds of human knowledge. We praise the man who first analyzed the air, or resolved water into its elements, or drew the lightning from the clouds, even though the discoveries may have been as much the fruits of time as of genius. A moral principle has a much wider and nearer influence on human happiness; nor can any discovery of truth be of more direct benefit to society than that which establishes a perpetual religious

peace, and spreads tranquillity through every community and every bosom. If Copernicus is held in perpetual reverence because, on his death-bed, he published to the world that the sun is the center of our system; if the name of Kepler is preserved for his sagacity in detecting the laws of the planetary motion; if the genius of Newton has been almost adored for dissecting a ray of light, and weighing heavenly bodies as in a balance,— let there be for the name of Roger Williams a place among those who have advanced moral science, and made themselves the benefactors of mankind.— *Vol. I., Page 297.*

SELECTION VII.

LOCKE AND PENN.

Locke, like William Penn, was tolerant; both loved freedom; both cherished truth in sincerity. But Locke kindled the torch of liberty at the fires of tradition; Penn, at the living light in the soul. Locke sought truth through the senses and the outward world; Penn looked inward to the divine revelations in every mind. Locke compared the soul to a sheet of white paper, just as Hobbes had compared it to a slate, on which time and chance might scrawl their experience; to Penn the soul was an organ which of itself instinctively breathes divine harmonies, like those musical instruments which are so curiously and perfectly framed that when once set in motion, they of themselves give forth all the melodies designed by the artist that made them. To Locke, "Conscience is nothing else than our own opinion of our own actions"; to Penn, it is the image of God, and his oracle in the soul. Locke, who was never a father, esteemed "the duty of parents to preserve their children not to be understood without reward and punishment";

Penn loved his children, with not a thought for the consequences. Locke, who was never married, declares marriage an affair of the senses; Penn reverenced woman as the object of inward, fervent affection, made not for lust, but for love. In studying the understanding, Locke begins with the sources of knowledge; Penn, with an inventory of our intellectual treasures. Locke deduces government from Noah and Adam, rests it upon contract, and announces its end to be the security of property; Penn, far from going back to Adam, or even to Noah, declares that "there must be a people before a government," and, deducing the right to institute government from man's moral nature, seeks its fundamental rules in the immutable dictates "of universal reason," its end in freedom and happiness. The system of Locke lends itself to contending factions of the most opposite interests and purposes; the doctrine of Fox and Penn being but the common creed of humanity, forbids division and insures the highest moral unity. To Locke, happiness is pleasure; things are good and evil only in reference to pleasure and pain; and to "inquire after the highest good is as absurd as to dispute whether the best relish be in apples, plums, or nuts"; Penn esteemed happiness to lie in the subjection of the baser instincts to the instinct of Deity in the breast, good and evil to be eternally and always as unlike as truth and falsehood, and the inquiry after the highest good to involve the purpose of existence. Locke says plainly that, but for rewards and punishments beyond the grave, "it is *certainly right* to eat and drink, and enjoy what we delight in"; Penn, like Plato and Fénélon, maintained the doctrine so terrible to despots that God is to be loved for his own sake, and virtue to be practiced for its intrinsic loveliness. Locke derives the idea of infinity from the senses, describes it as purely negative, and attributes it to nothing but space,

duration, and number; Penn derived the idea from the soul, and ascribed it to truth and virtue and God. Locke declares immortality a matter with which reason has nothing to do, and that revealed truth must be sustained by outward signs and visible acts of power; Penn saw truth by its own light, and summoned the soul to bear witness to its own glory. Locke believed "not so many men in wrong opinions as is commonly supposed, because the greatest part have no opinions at all, and do not know what they contend for"; Penn likewise vindicated the many, but it was because truth is the common inheritance of the race. Locke, in his love of tolerance, inveighed against the methods of persecution as "popish practices"; Penn censured no sect, but condemned bigotry of all sorts as inhuman. Locke, as an American lawgiver, dreaded a too numerous democracy, and reserved all power to wealth and the feudal proprietaries; Penn believed that God is in every conscience, his light in every soul, and therefore he built — such are his own words — "a free colony for all mankind." This is the praise of William Penn, that, in an age which had seen a popular revolution shipwreck popular liberty among selfish factions, which had seen Hugh Peter and Henry Vane perish by the hangman's cord and the axe; in an age when Sydney nourished the pride of patriotism rather than the sentiment of philanthropy, when Russell stood for the liberties of his order, and not for new enfranchisements, when Harrington and Shaftesbury and Locke thought government should rest on property, — Penn did not despair of humanity, and, though all history and experience denied the sovereignty of the people, dared to cherish the noble idea of man's capacity for self-government. Conscious that there was no room for its exercise in England, the pure enthusiast, like Calvin and Descartes, a voluntary exile,

was come to the banks of the Delaware to institute "THE HOLY EXPERIMENT."— *Vol. II., Page 119.*

SELECTION VIII.

WILLIAM PENN.

No man in England was more opposed to Roman Catholic dominion; but, like an honest lover of truth, and well aware that he and George Fox could win more converts than James II. and the pope, with all their patronage, he desired, in the controversy with the Roman church, nothing but equality. He knew that popery was in England the party of the past, from causes that lay in the heart of society, incapable of restoration; and therefore he ridiculed the popish panic as a scarecrow fit only to frighten children. Such was the strong antipathy of England to the Roman see, he foretold the sure success of the English church, if it should plow with that heifer, but equally predicted the still later result, that the Catholics, in their turn, becoming champions of civil freedom, would unite with its other advocates, and impair and subvert the English hierarchy. Penn never gave counsel at variance with popular rights. He resisted the commitment of the bishops to the Tower, and on the day of the birth of the Prince of Wales, pressed the king exceedingly to open their prison doors. His private correspondence proves that he esteemed parliament the only power through which his end could be gained, and, in the true spirit of liberty, he sought to infuse his principles into the public mind, that so they might find their place in the statute book through the convictions of his countrymen. England to-day confesses his sagacity, and is doing honor to his genius. He came too soon for success, and he was aware of it. After more than a cen-

tury, the laws which he reproved began gradually to be repealed; and the principle which he developed is slowly but firmly asserting its power over the legislation of Great Britain.

The political connections of William Penn have involved him in the obloquy which followed the overthrow of the Stuarts; and the friends to the tests, comprising nearly all the members of both political parties, into which England was soon divided, have generally been unfriendly to his good name. But their malice has been without permanent effect. There are not wanting those who believe the many to be the most competent judge of the beautiful; every Quaker believes them the best arbiter of the just and the true. It is certain that they, and they only, are the dispensers of glory. Their final award is given freely, and cannot be shaken. Every charge of hypocrisy, of selfishness, of vanity, of dissimulation, of credulous confidence; every form of reproach, from virulent abuse to cold apology; every ill-meant word from tory and Jesuit to blasphemer and infidel,—has been used against Penn; but the candor of his character has always triumphed over calumny. His name was safely cherished as a household word in the cottages of Wales and Ireland, and among the peasantry of Germany; and not a tenant of a wigwam from the sea to the Susquehanna doubted his integrity; his fame is now wide as the world; he is one of the few who have gained abiding glory.— *Vol. II., Page 132.*

SELECTION IX.

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

The colonists, including their philosophy in their religion, as the people up to that time had always done, were neither skeptics nor sensualists, but Christians.

The school that bows to the senses as the sole interpreter of truth had little share in colonizing our America. The colonists from Maine to Carolina, the adventurous companions of Smith, the proscribed Puritans that freighted the fleet of Winthrop, the Quaker outlaws that fled from jails, with a Newgate prisoner as their sovereign,— all had faith in God and in the soul. The system which had been revealed in Judea,— the system which combines and perfects the symbolic wisdom of the Orient, and the reflective genius of Greece,— the system, conforming to reason, yet kindling enthusiasm; always hastening reform, yet always conservative; proclaiming absolute equality among men, yet not suddenly abolishing the unequal institutions of society; guaranteeing absolute freedom, yet invoking the inexorable restrictions of duty; in the highest degree theoretical, and yet in the highest degree practical; awakening the inner man to a consciousness of his destiny, and yet adapted with exact harmony to the outward world; at once divine and human — this system was professed in every part of our widely extended country, and cradled our freedom.

Our fathers were not only Christians; they were, even in Maryland by a vast majority, elsewhere almost unanimously, Protestants. Now the Protestant Reformation, considered in its largest influence on politics, was the awakening of the common people to freedom of mind.— *Vol. II., Page 177.*

SELECTION X.

THE PURITANS.

THERE are some who love to enumerate the singularities of the early Puritans. They were opposed to wigs; they could preach against veils; they denounced long

hair; they disliked the cross in the banner, as much as the people of Paris disliked the lilies of the Bourbons. They would not allow Christmas to be kept sacred; they called neither months, nor days, nor seasons, nor churches, nor inns by the names common in England; they revived Scripture names at christenings. The grave Romans legislated on the costume of men, and their senate could even stoop to interfere with the triumphs of the sex to which civic honors are denied; the fathers of New England prohibited frivolous fashions in their own dress; and their austerity, checking extravagance even in woman, frowned on her hoods of silk and her scarfs of tiffany, extended the length of her sleeve to the wrist, and limited its greatest width to half an ell. The Puritans were formal and precise in their manners, singular in the forms of their legislation, rigid in the observance of their principles. Every topic of the day found a place in their extemporaneous prayers, and infused a stirring interest into their long and frequent sermons. The courts of Massachusetts respected in practice the code of Moses; the island of Rhode Island followed for a year or two Jewish precedents; in New Haven the members of the constituent committee were called the seven pillars, hewn out for the house of wisdom. But these are only the outward forms which gave to the new sect its marked exterior. If from the outside peculiarities, which so easily excite the sneer of the superficial observer, we look to the genius of the sect itself, Puritanism was religion struggling for the people; a war against tyranny and superstition. "Its absurdities," says one of its scoffers, "were the shelter for the noble principles of liberty." It was its office to engraft the new institutions of popular energy upon the old European system of a feudal aristocracy and popular servitude; the good was permanent; the outward emblems, which were the signs of the

party, were of transient duration, like the clay and ligaments which hold the graft in its place, and are brushed away as soon as the scion is firmly united.

The principles of Puritanism proclaimed the civil magistrate subordinate to the authority of religion; and its haughtiness in this respect has been compared to the "infatuated arrogance" of a Roman pontiff. In the firmness with which the principle was asserted, the Puritans did not yield to the Catholics; and if the will of God is the criterion of justice, both were, in one sense, in the right. The question arises, Who shall be the interpreter of that will? In the Roman Catholic Church the office was claimed by the infallible pontiff, who, as the self-constituted guardian of the oppressed, insisted on the power of dethroning kings, repealing laws, and subverting dynasties. The principle thus asserted could not but become subservient to the temporal ambition of the clergy. Puritanism conceded no such power to its spiritual guides; the church existed independent of its pastor, who owed his office to its free choice; the will of the majority was its law; and each one of the brethren possessed equal rights with the elders. The right, exercised by each congregation, of electing its own ministers was in itself a moral revolution; religion was now with the people, not over the people. Puritanism exalted the laity. Every individual who had experienced the raptures of devotion, every believer, who in moments of ecstasy had felt the assurance of the favor of God, was in his own eyes a consecrated person, chosen to do the noblest and godliest deeds. For him the wonderful counsels of the Almighty had appointed a Saviour; for him the laws of nature had been suspended and controlled, the heavens had opened, earth had quaked, the sun had veiled his face, and Christ had died and had risen again; for him prophets and apostles had revealed to the

world the oracles and the will of God. Before heaven he prostrated himself in the dust. Looking out upon mankind, how could he but respect himself whom God had chosen and redeemed? He cherished hope, he possessed faith; as he walked the earth his heart was in the skies. Angels hovered round his path, charged to minister to his soul; spirits of darkness vainly leagued together to tempt him from his allegiance. His burning piety could use no liturgy; his penitence revealed itself to no confessor. He knew no superior in holiness. He could as little become the slave of a priestcraft as of a despot. He was himself a judge of the orthodoxy of the elders; and if he feared the invisible powers of the air, of darkness, and of hell, he feared nothing on earth. Puritanism constituted not the Christian clergy, but the Christian people, the interpreter of the divine will. The voice of the majority was the voice of God; and the issue of Puritanism was popular sovereignty.

The effects of Puritanism display its character still more distinctly. Ecclesiastical tyranny is of all kinds the worst; its fruits are cowardice, idleness, ignorance, and poverty. Puritanism was a life-giving spirit; activity, thrift, intelligence followed in its train; and as for courage, a coward and a Puritan never went together.

It was in self-defense that Puritanism in America began those transient persecutions which shall find in me no apologist, and which yet were no more than a train of mists hovering of an autumn morning over the channel of a fine river, that diffused freshness and fertility wherever it wound. The people did not attempt to convert others, but to protect themselves; they never punished opinion as such; they never attempted to torture or terrify men into orthodoxy. The history of religious persecution in New England is simply this: the Puritans established a government in America, such as

the laws of natural justice warranted, and such as the statutes and common law of England did not warrant; and that was done by men who still acknowledged a limited allegiance to the parent state. The Episcopalians had declared themselves the enemies of the party, and waged against it a war of extermination. Puritanism excluded them from its asylum. Roger Williams, the apostle of "soul liberty," weakened civil independence by impairing its unity, and he was expelled, even though Massachusetts bore good testimony to his spotless virtues. Wheelwright and his friends, in their zeal for liberty of speech, were charged with forgetting their duty as citizens, and they also were exiled. The Anabaptist, who could not be relied upon as an ally, was guarded as a foe. The Quakers denounced the worship of New England as an abomination, and its government as treason; and they were excluded on pain of death. The fanatic for Calvinism was a fanatic for liberty; and in the moral warfare for freedom his creed was his support, and his most faithful ally in the battle.

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Historians have loved to eulogize the manners and virtues, the glory and the benefits, of chivalry. Puritanism accomplished for mankind far more. If it had the sectarian crime of intolerance, chivalry had the vices of dissoluteness. The knights were brave from gallantry of spirit; the Puritans from the fear of God. The knights obeyed the law of honor; the Puritans hearkened to the voice of duty. The knights were proud of loyalty; the Puritans of liberty. The knights did homage to monarchs, in whose smile they beheld honor, whose rebuke was the wound of disgrace; the Puritans, disdaining ceremony, would not bow at the name of Jesus, nor bend the knee to the King of kings. Chivalry delighted in outward show, favored pleasure, multiplied amusements,

and degraded the human race by an exclusive respect for the privileged classes; Puritanism bridled the passions, commanded the virtues of self-denial, and rescued the name of man from dishonor. The former valued courtesy; the latter, justice. The former adorned society by graceful refinements; the latter founded national grandeur on universal education. The institutions of chivalry were subverted by the gradually increasing weight and knowledge and opulence of the industrious classes; the Puritans, rallying upon those classes, planted in their hearts the undying principles of democratic liberty.— *Vol. I., Page 370.*

SELECTION XI.

CROMWELL.

Cromwell was one whom even his enemies cannot name without acknowledging his greatness.

The farmer of Huntingdon, accustomed only to rural occupations, unnoticed till he was more than forty years old, engaged in no higher plots than how to improve the returns of his land and fill his orchard with choice fruit, of a sudden became the best officer in the British army, and the greatest statesman of his time; subverted the English constitution, which had been the work of centuries; held in his own grasp the liberties which formed a part of the nature of the English people, and cast the kingdoms into a new mold. Religious peace, such as England till now has never again seen, flourished under his calm mediation; justice found its way even among the remotest Highlands of Scotland; commerce filled the English marts with prosperous activity; his fleets rode triumphant in the West Indies; Nova Scotia submitted to his orders without a struggle; the Dutch begged of

him for peace as for a boon; Louis XIV. was humiliated; the Protestants of Piedmont breathed their prayers in security. His squadron made sure of Jamaica; he had strong thoughts of Hispaniola and Cuba; and, to use his own words, resolved "to strive with the Spaniard for the mastery of all those seas." The glory of the English was spread throughout the world; "Under the tropic was their language spoke."

And yet his career was but an attempt to conciliate a union between his power and permanent public order; and the attempt was always unavailing, from the inherent impossibility growing out of the origin of his power. It was derived from the submission, not from the will of the people; it came by the sword, not from the nation, nor from established national usages. Cromwell saw the impracticability of a republic, and offered no excuse for his usurpations but the right of the strongest to restore tranquillity — the old plea of tyrants and oppressors from the beginning of the world.

He had made use of the enthusiasm of liberty for his advancement; he sought to sustain himself by conciliating the most opposite sects. For the republicans he had apologies. "The sons of Zeruiah, the lawyers and the men of wealth, are too strong for us. If we speak of reform, they cry out that we design to destroy all propriety." To the witness of the young Quaker against priestcraft and war, he replied: "It is very good; it is truth; if THOU and I were but an hour of a day together, we should be nearer one to the other." From the field of Dunbar he had charged the Long Parliament "to reform abuses, and not to multiply poor men for the benefit of the rich." Presently he appealed to the moneyed men and the lawyers; "he alone could save them from the levelers, men more ready to destroy than to reform." Did the sincere levelers, the true commonwealth's men,

make their way into his presence, he assured them "he preferred a shepherd's crook to the office of protector; he would resign all power so soon as God should reveal his definite will"; and then he would invite them to pray. "For," said he one day to the poet Waller, "I must talk to these people in their own style." Did the passion for political equality blaze up in the breasts of the yeomanry who constituted his bravest troops, it was checked by the terrors of a military execution. The Scotch Presbyterians could not be cajoled; he resolved to bow their pride; and did it in the only way in which it could be done, by wielding against their bigotry the great conception of the age, the doctrine of Roger Williams and Descartes' freedom of conscience.

"Approbation," said he, as I believe, with sincerity of conviction, "is an act of conveniency, not of necessity. Does a man speak foolishly, suffer him gladly, for ye are wise. Does he speak erroneously, stop such a man's mouth with sound words that cannot be gainsaid. Does he speak truly, rejoice in the truth." To win the royalists, he obtained an act of amnesty, a pledge of future favor to such of them as would submit. He courted the nation by exciting and gratifying national pride, by able negotiations, by victory and conquest. He sought to enlist in his favor the religious sympathies of the people, by assuming for England a guardianship over the interests of Protestant Christendom.

Seldom was there a less scrupulous or more gifted politician than Cromwell. But he was no longer a leader of a party. He had no party. A party cannot exist except by the force of common principles; it is truth, and truth only, that of itself rallies men together. Cromwell, the oppressor of the independents, had ceased to respect principles; his object was the advancement of his family; his hold on opinion went no farther than the

dread of anarchy, and the strong desire for order. If moderate and disinterested men consented to his power, it was to his power as high constable, engaged to preserve the public peace. He could not confer on his country a fixed form of government, for that required a concert with the national affections, which he was never able to gain. He had just notions of public liberty, and he understood how much the English people are disposed to magnify their representatives. Thrice did he attempt to connect his usurpation with the forms of representative government, and always without success. His first parliament, convened by special writ, and mainly composed of the members of the party by which he had been advanced, represented the movement in the English mind which had been the cause of the revolution. It indulged in pious ecstasies, laid claim to the special enjoyment of the presence of Jesus Christ, and spent whole days in exhortations and prayers. But the delirium of mysticism was not incompatible with clear notions of policy; and amidst the hyperboles of Oriental diction, they prepared to overthrow despotic power by using the power a despot had conceded. The objects of this assembly were all democratic: it labored to effect a most radical reform; to codify English law by reducing the huge volume of the common law into a few simple English axioms; to abolish tithes, and to establish an absolute religious freedom, such as the United States now enjoy. This parliament has for ages been the theme of unsparing ridicule. Historians, with little generosity toward a defeated party, have sided against the levelers, and the misfortune of failure in action has doomed them to censure and contempt. Yet they only demanded what had often been promised, and what, on the immutable principles of freedom, was right. They did but remember the truths which Cromwell had professed, and had forgotten.

Fearing their influence, and finding the republicans too honest to become the dupes of his ambition, he induced such members of the House of Commons as were his creatures to resign, and scattered the rest with his troops. The public looked on with much indifference. This parliament from the mode of its convocation, was unpopular; the royalists, the army, and the Presbyterians, alike dreaded its activity. With it expired the last feeble hope of a commonwealth. The successful soldier at once and openly pleading the necessity of the moment, assumed supreme power as the highest peace officer in the realm.— *Vol. I., Page 393.*

SELECTION XII.

THE HUDSON.

Hudson went on shore in one of the boats of the natives with an aged chief of a small tribe of the River Indians. He was taken to a house well constructed of oak bark, circular in shape, and arched in the roof, the granary of the beans and maize of the last year's harvest; while outside enough of them lay drying to load three ships. Two mats were spread out as seats for the strangers; food was immediately served in neat red wooden bowls; men, who were sent at once with bows and arrows for game, soon returned with pigeons; a fat dog, too, was killed, and haste made to prepare a feast. When Hudson refused to wait, they supposed him to be afraid of their weapons; and taking their arrows they broke them in pieces and threw them into the fire. The country was pleasant and fruitful, bearing wild grapes. "Of all lands on which I ever set my foot," says Hudson, "this is the best for tillage." The River Indians, for more than a century, preserved the memory of his visit.

The "Half Moon," on the nineteenth, drew near the landing of Kinderhook, where the Indians brought on board skins of beaver and otter. Hudson ventured no higher with the yacht; an exploring boat ascended a little above Albany to where the river was but seven feet deep, and the soundings grew uncertain.

So, on the twenty-third, Hudson turned his prow toward Holland, leaving the friendly tribes persuaded that the Dutch would revisit them the next year. As he went down the river, imagination peopled the region with towns. A party which, somewhere in Ulster county, went to walk on the west bank, found an exeellent soil, with large trees of oak and walnut and chestnut. The land near Newburg seemed a very pleasant site for a city. On the first of October Hudson passed below the mountains. On the fourth, not without more than one conflict with the savages, he sailed out of "the great mouth of THE GREAT RIVER" which bears his name, and about the season of the return of John Smith from Virginia to England, he steered for Europe, leaving to its solitude the beautiful land which he admired beyond any country in the world.

Somber forests shed a melancholy grandeur over the useless magnificence of nature, and hid in their deep shades the rich soil which no sun had ever warmed. No axe had leveled the giant progeny of the crowded groves, in which the fantastic forms of limbs, withered or riven by lightning, contrasted strangely with the verdure of a younger growth of branches. The wanton grape vine, fastening its leafy coils to the top of the tallest forest tree, swung with every breeze, like the loosened shrouds of a ship. Trees might everywhere be seen breaking from their roots in the marshy soil, and threatening to fall with the first rude gust; while the ground was strown with the remains of former woods,

over which a profusion of wild flowers wasted their freshness in mockery of the gloom. Reptiles sported in the stagnant pools, or crawled unharmed over piles of moldering logs. The spotted deer couched among the thickets; and there were none but wild animals to crop the uncut herbage of the prairies. Silence reigned, broken, it may have been, by the flight of land birds or the flapping of water fowl, and rendered more dismal by the howling of beasts of prey. The streams, not yet limited to a channel, spread over sand bars, tufted with copses of willow, or waded through wastes of reeds; or slowly but surely undermined the groups of sycamores that grew by their side. The smaller brooks spread out into sedgy swamps, that were overhung by clouds of mosquitoes; masses of decaying vegetation fed the exhalations with the seeds of pestilence, and made the balmy air of the summer's evening as deadly as it seemed grateful. Life and death were hideously mingled. The horrors of corruption frowned on the fruitless fertility of uncultivated nature.

And man, the occupant of the soil, was untamed as the savage scene, in harmony with the rude nature by which he was surrounded; a vagrant over the continent, in constant warfare with his fellow man; the bark of the birch his canoe; strings of shells his ornaments, his record, and his coin; the roots of uncultivated plants among his resources for food; his knowledge in architecture surpassed both in strength and durability by the skill of the beaver; bended saplings the beams of his house; the branches and rind of trees its roof; drifts of leaves his couch; mats of bulrushes his protection against the winter's cold; his religion the adoration of nature; his morals the promptings of undisciplined instinct; disputing with the wolves and bears the lordship of the soil,

and dividing with the squirrel the wild fruits with which the universal woodlands abounded.

The history of a country is modified by its climate, and, in many of its features, determined by its geographical situation. The region which Hudson had discovered possessed near the sea an unrivaled harbor; a river that admits the tide far into the interior on the north; the chain of great lakes, which have their springs in the heart of the continent; within its own limits the sources of rivers that flow to the gulfs of Mexico and St. Lawrence, and to the bays of Chesapeake and Delaware; of which, long before Europeans anchored off Sandy Hook, the warriors of the Five Nations availed themselves in their excursions to Quebec, to the Ohio, or the Susquehanna. With just sufficient difficulties to irritate, and not enough to dishearten, New York united richest lands with the highest adaptation to foreign and domestic commerce.

How changed is the scene from the wild country on which Hudson gazed! The earth glows with the colors of civilization; the meadows are enameled with choicest grasses; woodlands and cultivated fields are harmoniously blended; the birds of spring find their delight in orchards and trim gardens, variegated with selected plants from every temperate zone; while the brilliant flowers of the tropic bloom from the windows of the greenhouse, or mock at winter in the salon. The yeoman, living like a good neighbor near the fields he cultivates, glories in the fruitfulness of the valleys, and counts with honest exultation the flocks and herds that browse in safety on the hills. The thorn has given way to the rosebush; the cultivated vine clambers over rocks where the brood of serpents used to nestle; while industry smiles at the changes she has wrought, and inhales the bland air which now has health on its wings.

And man is still in harmony with nature, which he has subdued, developed, and adorned. For him the rivers that flow to remotest climes mingle their waters; for him the lakes gain new outlets to the ocean; for him the arch spans the flood, and science spreads iron pathways to the recent wilderness; for him the hills yield up the shining marble and the enduring granite; for him immense rafts bring down the forests of the interior; for him the marts of the city gather the produce of all climes, and libraries collect the works of every language and age. The passions of society are chastened into purity, manners are made benevolent by refinement, and the virtue of the country is the guardian of its peace. Science investigates the powers of every plant and mineral, to find medicines for disease; schools of surgery rival the establishments of the Old World: the genius of letters begins to unfold his powers in the warm sunshine of public favor. An active daily press, vigilant from party interests, free even to dissoluteness, watches the progress of society, and communicates every fact that can interest humanity; and commerce pushes its wharfs into the sea, blocks up the wide rivers with its fleets, and sends its ships, the pride of naval architecture, to every zone.— *Vol. II., Page 28.*

SELECTION XIII.

FRANKLIN.

On the deep foundations of sobriety, frugality, and industry, the young journeyman built his fortunes and fame; and he soon came to have a printing office of his own. Toiling early and late, with his own hands he set types and worked at the press; with his own hands would trundle to the office in a wheelbarrow the reams of paper

which he was to use. His ingenuity was such he could form letters, make types and woodcuts, and engrave vignettes in copper. The assembly of Pennsylvania chose him its printer. He planned a newspaper; and when he became its proprietor and editor, he defended freedom of thought and speech, and the inalienable power of the people. He proposed improvements in the schools of Philadelphia, invented the system of subscription libraries, and laid the foundation of one that was long the most considerable library in America; he suggested the establishment of an academy, which has ripened into a university; he saw the benefit of concert in the pursuit of science, and gathered a philosophical society for its advancement. The intelligent and highly cultivated Logan bore testimony to his merits: "Our most ingenious printer has the clearest understanding, with extreme modesty. He is certainly an extraordinary man"; "of a singularly good judgment, but of equal modesty"; "excellent, yet humble." "Do not imagine," he adds, "that I overdo in my character of Benjamin Franklin, for I am rather short in it."

When the students of nature began to investigate the wonders of electricity, Franklin excelled all observers in the simplicity and lucid exposition of his experiments, and in "sagacity and power of scientific generalization." It was he who first suggested the explanation of thunder gusts and the northern lights on electrical principles, and in the summer of 1752, going out into the fields, with no instrument but a kite, no companion but his son, established his theory by obtaining a line of connection with a thunder cloud. Nor did he cease till he had made the lightning a household pastime, taught his family to catch the subtle fluid in its leaps between the earth and the sky, and ascertained how it might be compelled to pass harmlessly over the dwellings of men.

Franklin looked quietly and deeply into the secrets of nature. His clear understanding was never perverted by passion, nor corrupted by the pride of theory. The son of a rigid Calvinist, the grandson of a tolerant Quaker, he had from boyhood been familiar not only with theological subtleties, but with a catholic respect for freedom of mind. Skeptical of tradition as the basis of faith, he respected reason rather than authority; and after a momentary lapse into fatalism, he gained with increasing years an increasing trust in the overruling providence of God. Adhering to none of all the religions in the colonies, he yet devoutly, though without form, adhered to religion. But though famous as a disputant, and having a natural aptitude for metaphysics, he obeyed the tendency of his age, and sought by observation to win an insight into the mysteries of being. The best observers praise his method most. He so sincerely loved truth, that in his pursuit of her she met him half-way. Without prejudice and without bias, he discerned intuitively the identity of the laws of nature with those of which humanity is conscious; so that his mind was like a mirror, in which the universe as it reflected itself, revealed her laws. His morality, repudiating ascetic severities, and the system which enjoins them, was indulgent to appetites of which he abhorred the sway; but his affections were of a calm intensity; in all his career, the love of man held the mastery over personal interest. He had not the imagination which inspires the bard or kindles the orator; but an exquisite propriety, parsimonious of ornament, gave ease, correctness, and graceful simplicity even to his most careless writings. In life, also, his tastes were delicate. Indifferent to the pleasures of the table, he relished the delights of music and harmony, of which he enlarged the instruments. His blandness of temper, his modesty, the benignity of his manners, made

him the favorite of intelligent society; and with healthy cheerfulness, he derived pleasure from books, from philosophy, from conversation,—now administering consolation to the sorrower, now indulging in light-hearted gayety.

In his intercourse, the universality of his perceptions bore, perhaps, the character of humor; but, while he clearly discerned the contrast between the grandeur of the universe and the feebleness of man, a serene benevolence saved him from contempt of his race, or disgust at its toils. To superficial observers he might have seemed as an alien from speculative truth, limiting himself to the world of the senses; and yet, in study, and among men, his mind always sought to discover and apply the general principles by which nature and affairs are controlled — now deducing from the theory of caloric improvements in fireplaces and lanterns, and now advancing human freedom by firm inductions from the inalienable rights of man. Never professing enthusiasm, never making a parade of sentiment, his practical wisdom was sometimes mistaken for the offspring of selfish prudence; yet his hope was steadfast, like that hope which rests on the Rock of Ages, and his conduct was as unerring as though the light that led him was a light from heaven. He never anticipated action by theories of self-sacrificing virtue; and yet, in the moments of intense activity, he, from the abodes of ideal truth, brought down and applied to the affairs of life the principles of goodness, as unostentatiously as became the man who, with a kite and hempen string, drew the lightning from the skies. He separated himself so little from his age that he has been called the representative of materialism; and yet, when he thought on religion, his mind passed beyond reliance on sects to faith in God; when he wrote on politics, he founded freedom on principles that know no change;

when he turned an observing eye on nature, he passed from the effect to the cause, from individual appearances to universal laws; when he reflected on history, his philosophic mind found gladness and repose in the clear anticipation of the progress of humanity.— *Vol. II., Page 538.*

SELECTION XIV.

LEXINGTON.

On the 19th of April, just after midnight, the message from Warren reached Adams and Hancock, who at once divined the object of the expedition. Revere, therefore, and Dawes, joined by Samuel Prescott, "a high Son of Liberty," from Concord, rode forward, calling up the inhabitants as they passed along, till in Lincoln they fell upon a party of British officers. Revere and Dawes were seized and taken back to Lexington, where they were released; but Prescott leaped over a low stone wall, and galloped on for Concord.

There, at about two in the morning, a peal from the belfry of the meeting house brought together the inhabitants of the place, young and old, with their firelocks, ready to make good the resolute words of their town debates.

Among the most alert was William Emerson, the minister, with gun in hand, his powder horn and pouch of balls slung over his shoulder. By his sermons and his prayers, he had so hallowed the enthusiasm of his flock that they held the defense of their liberties a part of their covenant with God; his presence with arms strengthened their sense of duty.

From daybreak to sunrise, the summons ran from house to house through Acton. Express messengers and

the call of minute men spread widely the alarm. How children trembled as they were scared out of sleep by the cries! How women, with heaving breasts, bravely seconded their husbands! How the countrymen, forced suddenly to arms, without guides or counselors, took instant counsel of their courage! The mighty chorus of voices rose from the scattered farm houses, and, as it were, from the very ashes of the dead. Come forth, champions of liberty; now free your country; protect your sons and daughters, your wives and homesteads; rescue the houses of the God of your fathers, the franchises handed down from your ancestors. Now all is at stake; the battle is for all. * * *

At two in the morning, under the eye of the minister, and of Hancock and Adams, Lexington common was alive with the minute men; and not with them only, but with the old men also, who were exempts, except in case of immediate danger to the town. The roll was called, and, of militia and alarm men, about one hundred and thirty answered to their names. The captain, John Parker, ordered every one to load with powder and ball, but to take care not to be the first to fire. Messengers, sent to look for the British regulars, reported that there were no signs of their approach. A watch was therefore set, and the company dismissed, with orders to come together at beat of drum. Some went to their own homes; some to the tavern, near the southeast corner of the common. Adams and Hancock, whose proscription had already been divulged, and whose seizure was believed to be intended, was persuaded to retire toward Woburn.

The last stars were vanishing from night, when the foremost party, led by Pitcairn, a major of marines, was discovered advancing quickly and in silence. Alarm guns were fired, and the drums beat, not a call to village husbandmen only, but the reveille to humanity. Less

than seventy, perhaps less than sixty, obeyed the summons, and, in sight of half as many boys and unarmed men, were paraded in two ranks a few rods north of the meeting house.

How often in that building had they, with renewed professions of their faith, looked up to God as the stay of their fathers and the protector of their privileges! How often on that village green, hard by the burial place of their forefathers, had they pledged themselves to each other to combat manfully for their birthright inheritance of liberty! There they now stood side by side, under the provincial banner, with arms in their hands, silent and fearless, willing to fight for their privileges, scrupulous not to begin civil war, and unsuspicious of immediate danger. The ground on which they trod was the altar of freedom, and they were to furnish the victims.

The British van, hearing the drum and the alarm guns, halted to load; the remaining companies came up; and, at half an hour before sunrise, the advance party hurried forward at double-quick time, almost upon a run, closely followed by the grenadiers. Pitcairn rode in front, and, when within five or six rods of the minute men, cried out: "Disperse, ye villains! ye rebels, disperse! lay down your arms! Why don't you lay down your arms and disperse?" The main part of the countrymen stood motionless in the ranks, witnesses against aggression, too few to resist, too brave to fly. At this, Pitcairn discharged a pistol, and with a loud voice cried, "Fire!" The order was followed first by a few guns, which did no execution, and by a close and deadly discharge of musketry.

In the disparity of numbers, Parker ordered his men to disperse. Then, and not till then, did a few of them, on their own impulse, return the British fire. These random shots of fugitives or dying men did no harm,

except that Pitcairn's horse was perhaps grazed, and a private of the tenth light infantry was touched slightly in the leg.

Jonas Parker, the strongest and best wrestler in Lexington, had promised never to run from British troops; and he kept his vow. A wound brought him on his knees. Having discharged his gun, he was preparing to load it again, when as sound a heart as ever throbbed for freedom was stilled by a bayonet, and he lay on the post which he took at the morning's drum-beat. So fell Isaac Muzzey, and so died the aged Robert Munroe, the same who in 1758 had been an ensign at Louisburg. Jonathan Harrington, Jr., was struck in front of his own house on the north of the common. His wife was at the window as he fell. With blood gushing from his breast, he rose in her sight, tottered, fell again, then crawled on hands and knees toward his dwelling; she ran to meet him, but only reached him as he expired on the threshold. Caleb Harrington, who had gone into the meeting house for powder, was shot as he came out. Samuel Hadley and John Brown were pursued and killed after they had left the green. Asahel Porter, of Woburn, who had been taken prisoner by the British on the march, endeavoring to escape, was shot within a few rods of the common.

Day came in all the beauty of an early spring. The trees were budding; the grass growing rankly a full month before its time; the blue bird and the robin gladdening the genial season, and calling forth the beams of the sun which on that morning shone with the warmth of summer; but distress and horror gathered over the inhabitants of the peaceful town. There on the green lay in death, the gray-haired and the young; the grassy field was red "with the innocent blood of their brethren slain," crying unto God for vengeance from the ground.

Seven of the men of Lexington were killed, nine

wounded — a quarter part of all who stood in arms on the green. These are the village heroes, who were more than of noble blood, proving by their spirit that they were of a race divine. They gave their lives in testimony to the rights of mankind, bequeathing to their country an assurance of success in the mighty struggle which they began. Their names are had in grateful remembrance, and the expanding millions of their countrymen renew and multiply their praise from generation to generation. They fulfilled their duty not from the accidental impulse of the moment; their action was the slowly ripened fruit of Providence and of time. The light that led them on was combined of rays from the whole history of the race; from the traditions of the Hebrews in the gray of the world's morning; from the heroes and sages of republican Greece and Rome; from the example of Him who died on the cross for humanity; from the religious creed which proclaimed the divine presence in man, and on this truth, as in a life boat, floated the liberties of nations over the dark flood of the middle ages; from the customs of the Germans transmitted out of their forests to the councils of Saxon England; from the burning faith and courage of Martin Luther; from trust in the inevitable universality of God's sovereignty as taught by Paul of Tarsus and Augustine, through Calvin and the divines of New England; from the avenging fierceness of the Puritans, who dashed the miter on the ruins of the throne; from the bold dissent and creative self-assertion of the earliest emigrants to Massachusetts; from the statesmen who made, and the philosophers who expounded, the revolution of England; from the liberal spirit and analyzing inquisitiveness of the eighteenth century; from the cloud of witnesses of all the ages to the reality and rightfulness of human freedom. All the centuries bowed themselves from the recesses of the past

to cheer in their sacrifice the lowly men who proved themselves worthy of their forerunners, and whose children rise up and call them blessed.

Heedless of his own danger, Samuel Adams, with the voice of a prophet, exclaimed: "Oh, what a glorious morning is this!" for he saw his country's independence hastening on, and, like Columbus in the tempest, knew that the storm did but bear him the more swiftly toward the undiscovered world.— *Vol. IV., Page 517.*

SELECTION XV.

WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON was then forty-three years of age. In stature he a little exceeded six feet; his limbs were sinewy and well proportioned; his chest broad; his figure stately, blending dignity of presence with ease. His robust constitution had been tried and invigorated by his early life in the wilderness, the habit of occupation out of doors, and rigid temperance; so that few equaled him in strength of arm, or power of endurance, or noble horsemanship. His complexion was florid; his hair dark brown; his head in its shape perfectly round. His broad nostrils seemed formed to give expression and escape to scornful anger. His eyebrows were rayed and finely arched. His dark-blue eyes, which were deeply set, had an expression of resignation, and an earnestness that was almost pensiveness. His forehead was sometimes marked with thought, but never with inquietude; his countenance was mild and pleasing and full of benignity.

At eleven years old left an orphan to the care of an excellent but unlettered mother, he grew up without learning. Of arithmetic and geometry he acquired just knowledge enough to practice measuring land, but all

his instructions at school taught him not so much as the orthography or rules of grammar of his own tongue. His culture was altogether his own work, and he was in the strictest sense a self-made man; yet from his early life he never seemed uneducated. At sixteen, he went into the wilderness as a surveyor, and for three years continued the pursuit, where the forests trained him, in meditative solitude, to freedom and largeness of mind, and nature revealed to him her obedience to serene and silent laws. In his intervals from toil, he seemed always to be attracted to the best men, and to be cherished by them. Fairfax, his employer, an Oxford scholar, already aged, became his fast friend. He read little, but with close attention. Whatever he took in hand, he applied himself to with care, and his papers, which have been preserved, show how he almost imperceptibly gained the power of writing correctly, always expressing himself with clearness and directness, often with felicity of language and grace.

When the frontiers on the west became disturbed, he at nineteen was commissioned an adjutant-general with the rank of major. At twenty-one he went as the envoy of Virginia to the council of Indian chiefs on the Ohio and to the French officers near Lake Erie.

Fame waited upon him from his youth, and no one of his colony was so much spoken of. He conducted the first military expedition from Virginia that crossed the Alleghanies. Braddock selected him as an aid, and he was the only man who came out of the disastrous defeat near the Monongahela, with increased reputation, which extended to England. The next year, when he was but four-and-twenty, "the great esteem" in which he was held in Virginia, and his "real merit," led the lieutenant-governor of Maryland to request that he might be "commissionated and appointed second in command" of

the army designed to march to the Ohio, and Shirley, the commander in chief, heard the proposal "with great satisfaction and pleasure," for "he knew no provincial upon the continent to whom he would so readily give that rank as to Washington." In 1758 he acted under Forbes as a brigadier, and but for him that general would never have crossed the mountains.

Courage was so natural to him that it was hardly spoken of to his praise; no one ever at any moment of his life discovered in him the least shrinking in danger, and he had a hardihood of daring which escaped notice, because it was so enveloped by superior calmness and wisdom.

His address was most easy and agreeable; his step firm and graceful; his air neither grave nor familiar. He was as cheerful as he was spirited, frank and communicative in the society of his friends, fond of the fox chase and the dance, often sportive in his letters, and liked a hearty laugh.

"His smile," writes Chastellux, "was always the smile of benevolence." This joyousness of disposition remained to the last, though the vastness of his responsibility was soon to take from him the right of displaying the impulsive qualities of his nature, and the weight which he was to bear up was to overlay and repress his gayety and openness.

His hand was liberal; giving quietly and without observation, as though he was ashamed of nothing but being discovered in doing good. He was kindly and compassionate, and of lively sensibility to the sorrows of others; so that, if his country had only needed a victim for its relief, he would have willingly offered himself as a sacrifice. But while he was prodigal of himself, he was considerate for others; ever parsimonious of the blood of his countrymen.

He was prudent in the management of his private affairs, purchased rich lands from the Mohawk valley to the flats of the Kanawha, and improved his fortune by the correctness of his judgment; but, as a public man, he knew no other aim than the good of his country, and in the hour of his country's poverty he refused personal emolument for his service.

His faculties were so well balanced and combined that his constitution, free from excess, was tempered evenly with all the elements of activity, and his mind resembled a well ordered commonwealth; his passions, which had the intensest vigor, owned allegiance to reason, and with all the fiery quickness of his spirit, his impetuous and massive will was held in check by consummate judgment.

He had in his composition a calm, which gave him in moments of highest excitement, the power of self-control, and enabled him to excel in patience, even when he had most cause for disgust. Washington was offered a command when there was little to bring out the unorganized resources of the continent but his own influence, and authority was connected with the people by the most frail, most attenuated, scarcely discernible threads; yet, vehement as was his nature, impassioned as was his courage, he so restrained his ardor that he never failed continuously to exert the attracting power of that influence, and never exerted it so sharply as to break its force.

In secrecy he was unsurpassed; but his secrecy had the character of prudent reserve, not of cunning or concealment. His great natural power of vigilance had been developed by his life in the wilderness.

His understanding was lucid, and his judgment accurate; so that his conduct never betrayed hurry or confusion. No detail was too minute for his personal inquiry and continued supervision; and at the same time he com-

prehended events in their widest aspects and relations. He never seemed above the object that engaged his attention, and he was always equal, without an effort, to the solution of the highest questions, even when there existed no precedents to guide his decision. In the perfection of the reflective powers, which he used habitually, he had no peer.

In this way he never drew to himself admiration for the possession of any one quality in excess, never made in council any one suggestion that was sublime but impracticable, never in action took to himself the praise or the blame of undertakings astonishing in conception, but beyond his means of execution. It was the most wonderful accomplishment of this man, that, placed upon the largest theater of events, at the head of the greatest revolution in human affairs, he never failed to observe all that was possible, and at the same time to bound his aspirations by that which was possible.

A slight tinge in his character, perceptible only to the close observer, revealed the region from which he sprung, and he might be described as the best specimen of manhood as developed in the south; but his qualities were so faultlessly proportioned, that his whole country rather claimed him as its choicest representative, the most complete expression of all its attainments and aspirations. He studied his country, and conformed to it. His countrymen felt that he was the best type of America, and rejoiced in it, and were proud of it. They lived in his life, and made his success and his praise their own.

Profoundly impressed with confidence in God's providence, and exemplary in his respect for the forms of public worship, no philosopher of the eighteenth century was more firm in the support of freedom of religious opinion, none more remote from bigotry; but belief in God, and trust in his overruling power, formed the

essence of his character. Divine wisdom not only illumines the spirit, it inspires the will. Washington was a man of action, and not of theory or words; his creed appears in his life, not in his professions, which burst from him very rarely, and only at those great moments of crisis in the fortunes of his country, when earth and heaven seemed actually to meet, and his emotions became too intense for suppression; but his whole being was one continued act of faith in the eternal, intelligent, moral order of the universe. Integrity was so completely the law of his nature, that a planet would sooner have shot from its sphere than he have departed from his uprightness, which was so constant that it often seemed to be almost impersonal. "His integrity was the most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known," writes Jefferson; "no motives of interest or consanguinity, of friendship or hatred, being able to bias his decision."

They say of Giotto, that he introduced goodness into the art of painting. Washington carried it with him to the camp and the cabinet, and established a new criterion of human greatness. The purity of his will confirmed his fortitude; and as he never faltered in his faith in virtue, he stood fast by that which he knew to be just; free from illusions; never dejected by the apprehension of the difficulties and perils that went before him, and drawing the promise of success from the justice of his cause. Hence he was persevering, leaving nothing unfinished; devoid of all taint of obstinacy in his firmness; seeking and gladly receiving advice, but immovable in his devotedness to right.

Of a "retiring modesty and habitual reserve," his ambition was no more than the consciousness of his power, and was subordinate to his sense of duty; he took the foremost place, for he knew, from inborn magnanimity, that it belonged to him, and he dared not with-

hold the service required of him; so that, with all his humility, he was by necessity the first, though never for himself or for private ends. He loved fame, the approval of coming generations, the good opinion of his fellow-men of his own time, and he desired to make his conduct coincide with their wishes; but not fear of censure, not the prospect of applause, could tempt him to swerve from rectitude, and the praise which he coveted was the sympathy of that moral sentiment which exists in every human breast, and goes forth only to the welcome of virtue.

There have been soldiers who have achieved mightier victories in the field, and made conquests more nearly corresponding to the boundlessness of selfish ambition; statesmen who have been connected with more startling upheavals of society. But it is the greatness of Washington that in public trusts he used power solely for the public good; that he was the life and moderator and stay of the most momentous revolution in human affairs, its moving impulse, and its restraining power. Combining the centripetal and the centrifugal forces in their utmost strength, and in perfect relations, with creative grandeur of instinct, he held ruin in check, and renewed and perfected the institutions of his country. Finding the colonies disconnected and dependent, he left them such a united and well ordered commonwealth as no visionary had believed to be possible; so that it has been truly said: "He was as fortunate as great and good."

This also is the praise of Washington: that never in the tide of time has any man lived who had in so great a degree the almost divine faculty to command the confidence of his fellow men and rule the willing. Wherever he became known — in his family, his neighborhood, his county, his native state, the continent, the camp,

civil life, among the common people, in foreign courts, throughout the civilized world, and even among the savages — he, beyond all other men, had the confidence of his kind.

Washington saw at a glance the difficulties of the position to which he had been chosen. He was appointed by a government which, in its form, was one of the worst of all possible governments in time of peace, and was sure to reveal its defects still more plainly in time of war. It was inchoate and without an executive head; the several branches of administration, if to be conducted at all, were to be conducted by separate, ever-changing, and irresponsible committees; and all questions of legislation and of action ultimately decided by the one ill-organized body of men who, in respect of granted powers, were too feeble even to originate advice. They were not the representatives of a union; they alone constituted the union, of which, as yet, there was no other bond. One whole department of government, the judicial, was entirely wanting. So was, in truth, the executive. The congress had no ability whatever to enforce a decree of their own; they had no revenue, and no authority to collect a revenue; they had none of the materials of war; they did not own a cannon, nor a pound of powder, nor a tent, nor a musket; they had no regularly enlisted army, and had even a jealousy of forming an army, and depended on the zeal of volunteers, or of men to be enlisted for less than seven months. There were no experienced officers, and no methods projected for obtaining them. Washington saw it all. He was in the enjoyment of fame; he wished not to forfeit the esteem of his fellow men; and his eye glistened with a tear as he said in confidence to Patrick Henry on occasion of his appointment: "This day will be the commencement of the decline of my reputation."

But this consideration did not make him waver. On the sixteenth of June he appeared in his place in congress, and after refusing all pay beyond his expenses, he spoke with unfeigned modesty; "As the congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service, and for the support of the glorious cause. But I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I this day declare, with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with."

The next day, the delegates of all the colonies resolved unanimously "to maintain and assist him, and adhere to him, the said George Washington, Esquire, with their lives and fortunes in the same cause."

By his commission he was invested with the command over all forces raised or to be raised by the United Colonies, and with full power and authority to order the army as he should think for the good and welfare of the service, "in unforeseen emergencies using his best circumspection, and advising with his council of war"; and he was instructed to take "special care that the liberties of America receive no detriment."

Washington knew that he must depend for success on a steady continuance of purpose in an imperfectly united continent, and on his personal influence over separate and half-formed governments, with most of which he was wholly unacquainted. He foresaw a long and arduous struggle; but a secret consciousness of his power bade him not to fear; and, whatever might be the backwardness of others, he never admitted the thought of sheathing his sword or resigning his command till the work of vindicating American liberty should be done. To his wife he unbosomed his inmost mind. "I hope my undertaking this service is designed to answer some good purpose. I rely confidently on that Providence

which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me."

His acceptance changed the aspect of affairs. John Adams, looking with complacency upon "the modest and virtuous, the amiable, generous, and brave general," as the choice of Massachusetts, said: "This appointment will have a great effect in cementing the union of these colonies." "The general is one of the most important characters of the world; upon him depend the liberties of America." All hearts turned with affection toward Washington. This is he who was raised up to be, not the head of a party, but the father of his country.—*Vol. IV., Page 593.*

SELECTION XVI.

JOHN ADAMS.

On the ninth day of February John Adams resumed his seat in congress, with Elbridge Gerry for a colleague, in place of the feeble Cushing, and with instructions from his constituents to establish liberty in America upon a permanent basis. His nature was robust and manly; now he was in the happiest mood of mind for asserting the independence of his country. He had confidence in the ability of New England to drive away their enemy; in Washington, as a brave and prudent commander; in his wife, who cheered him with the fortitude of womanly heroism; in the cause of his country, which seemed so bound up with the welfare of mankind that Providence could not suffer its defeat; in himself, for his convictions were clear, his will fixed, and his mind prepared to let his little property and his life go, sooner than the rights of his country.

Looking into himself, he saw weaknesses enough, but

neither meanness nor dishonesty nor timidity. His overweening self-esteem was his chief blemish, and, if he compared himself with his great fellow workers, there was some point on which he was superior to any one of them; he had more learning than Washington, or any other American statesman of his age; better knowledge of freedom as grounded in law than Samuel Adams; clearer insight into the constructive elements of government than Franklin; more power in debate than Jefferson; more courageous manliness than Dickinson; more force in motion than Jay; so that, by varying and confining his comparisons, he could easily fancy himself the greatest of them all. He was capable of thinking himself the center of any circle, to which he had been no more than a tangent; his vanity was in such excess that in manhood it sometimes confused his judgment, and in age bewildered his memory; but the stain did not reach beyond the surface; it impaired the luster, not the hardy integrity of his character. He was humane and frank, generous and clement; if he could never sit placidly under the shade of a greater reputation than his own, his envy, though it laid open how deeply his self-love was wounded, had hardly a tinge of malignity. He did his fame injustice when, later in life, he represented himself as suffering from persecutions on account of his early zeal for independence; he was no weakling to whine about injured feelings; he went to his task, sturdy and cheery and brave; he was the hammer, and not the anvil, and it was for others to fear his prowess and to shrink under his blows. His courage was unflinching in debate, and everywhere else; he never knew what fear was; and had he gone into the army, as he once longed to do, he would have taken there the virtues of temperance, decision, and intrepidity. To his latest old age, his spirit was robust, buoyant, and joyous; he saw ten

times as much pleasure as pain in the world; and, after his arm quivered and his eye grew dim, he was ready to begin life anew and fight its battle over again.

In his youth he fell among skeptics, read Bolingbroke's works five times through, and accustomed himself to reason freely and think boldly; he esteemed himself a profound metaphysician, but had only skimmed the speculations of others; though at first destined to be a minister, he became a rebel to Calvinism, and never had any very fixed religious creed. For all that, he was a stanch man of New England, and his fond partiality to its people, its institutions, its social condition, and its laws, followed him into congress and its committees and social life, tinctured his judgment, and clinched his prepossessions; but the elements in New England that he loved most were those which were eminently friendly to universal culture and republican equality. A poor farmer's son, bent on making his way in the world, at twenty years old beginning to earn his own bread, pinched and starved as master of a "stingy" country school, he formed early habits of order and frugality, and steadily advanced to fortune; but, though exact in his accounts, there was nothing niggardly in his thrift, and his modest hospitality was prompt and hearty. He loved homage, and it made him blind; to those who flattered him he gave his confidence freely, and often unwisely, and while he watched the general movement of affairs with comprehensive sagacity, he was never a calm observer of individual men. He was of the choleric temperament, of a large and compact frame; he was singularly sensitive; could break out into uncontrollable rage, and never learned to rule his own spirit; but his anger did not so much drive him to do wrong as to do right ungraciously. No man was less fitted to gain his end by arts of indirection; he knew not how to intrigue, was indiscreetly

talkative, and almost thought aloud; his ways of courting support were uncouth, so that he made few friends except by his weight of character and integrity, and was unapt as the leader of a party.

Hating intolerance in all its forms, an impassioned lover of civil liberty, as the glory of man and the best evidence and the best result of civilization, he, of all men in congress, was incomparable as a dogmatist; essentially right-minded; loving to teach with authority; pressing onward unsparingly with his argument; impatient of contradiction; unequaled as a positive champion of the right. He was the Martin Luther of the American revolution, compelled to utter his convictions fearlessly by an inborn energy which forbade his acting otherwise. He was now too much in earnest, and too much engaged by the greatness of his work to think of himself; too anxiously desiring aid, to disparage those who gave it. In the fervor of his activity, his faults disappeared. His intellect and public spirit, all the noblest parts of his nature, were called into the fullest exercise, and strained to the uttermost of their healthful power. Combining, more than any other, farness of sight and fixedness of belief with courage and power of utterance, he was looked up to as the ablest debater in congress. Preserving some of the habits of the lawyer, he was redundant in words and cumulative in argument; but his warmth and sincerity kept him from the affectations of a pedant or a rhetorician. Forbearance was no longer in season; the irrepressible talent of persevering, peremptory assertion was wanted; the more he was hurried along by his own vehement will, the better; now his country, humanity, the age, the hour, demanded that the right should be spoken out; his high excitement had not the air of passion, but appeared, as it was, the clear perception of the sublimity of his task. When, in the life of a states-

man, were six months of more importance to the race than these six months in the career of John Adams?—*Vol. V., Page 206.*

SELECTION XVII.

ABIGAIL ADAMS.

In a few weeks the proclamation reached the colonies at several ports. Men said: "While America is still on her knees, the king aims a dagger at her heart." Abigail Smith, the wife of John Adams, was at the time in their home, near the foot of Penn Hill, charged with the sole care of their little brood of children; managing their farm; keeping house with frugality, though opening her doors to the houseless, and giving with good will a part of her scant portion to the poor; seeking work for her own hands, and ever occupied, now at the spinning-wheel, now making amends for having never been sent to school by learning French, though with the aid of books alone. Since the departure of her husband for congress, the arrow of death had sped near her by day, and the pestilence that walks in darkness had entered her humble mansion; she herself was still weak after a violent illness; her house was a hospital in every part; and such was the distress of the neighborhood, she could hardly find a well person to assist in looking after the sick. Her youngest son had been rescued from the grave by her nursing; her own mother had been taken away, and, after the austere manner of her forefathers, buried without prayer. Woe followed woe, and one affliction trod on the heels of another. Winter was hurrying on. During the day family affairs took off her attention, but her long evenings, broken by the sound of the storm on the ocean or the enemy's artillery at Boston, were lone-

some and melancholy. Ever in the silent night dwelling on the love and tenderness of her departed parent, she needed the consolation of her husband's presence; but when, in November, she read the king's proclamation, she willingly gave up her nearest friend to his perilous duties, and sent him her cheering message: "This intelligence will make a plain path for you, though a dangerous one. I could not join to-day in the petitions of our worthy pastor for a reconciliation between our no longer parent state, but tyrant state, and these colonies. Let us separate; they are unworthy to be our brethren. Let us renounce them; and instead of supplications, as formerly, for their prosperity and happiness, let us beseech the Almighty to blast their counsels, and bring to naught all their devices."—*Vol. V., Page 82.*

SELECTION XVIII.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

The Declaration of Independence was silently but steadily prepared in the convictions of all the people, just as every spire of grass is impearled by the dew, and reflects the morning sun. The many are more sagacious, more disinterested, more courageous than the few. Language was their spontaneous creation; the science of ethics, as the word implies, is deduced from the inspirations of their conscience; law itself, as the great jurists have perceived, is necessarily molded by their inward nature; the poet embodies in words their oracles and their litanies; the philosopher draws ideal thought from the storehouse of their mind; the national heart is the great reservoir of noble resolutions, and of high, enduring designs. It was the common people whose craving for the recognition of the unity of the universe, and for a

perfect mediation between themselves and the Infinite, bore the Christian religion to its triumph over every worldly influence. It was the public faith that, in the days of the Reformation, sought abstract truth behind forms that had been abused, and outward acts that had lost their significance; and now the popular desire was once more the voice of the harbinger, crying in the wilderness. The people, whose spirit far outran conventions and congresses, had grown weary of atrophied institutions, and longed to fathom the mystery of the life of the public life. Instead of continuing a superstitious reverence for the scepter and the throne, as the symbols of order, they yearned for a nearer converse with the eternal rules of right as the generative principles of social peace

Reid, among Scottish metaphysicians, and Chatham, the foremost of British statesmen, had discovered in COMMON SENSE the criterion of morals and truth; the common sense of the people now claimed its right to sit in judgment on the greatest question ever raised in the political world. All the colonies, as though they had been but one individual being, felt themselves wounded to the soul when they heard, and could no longer doubt, that George III. was hiring foreign mercenaries to reduce them to subjection.— *Vol. V., Page 165.*

SELECTION XIX.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

THE resolution of congress changed the old thirteen British colonies into free and independent states. It remained to set forth the reason for this act, and the principles which the new people would own as their guides. Of the committee appointed for that duty,

Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia, had received the largest number of votes, and was in that manner singled out to draft the confession of faith of the rising empire. He owed this distinction to respect for the colony which he represented, to the consummate ability of the state papers which he had already written, and to that general favor which follows merit, modesty, and a sweet disposition; but the quality which specially fitted him for the task was the sympathetic character of his nature, by which he was able, with instinctive perception, to read the soul of the nation, and, having collected its best thoughts and noblest feelings, to give them out in clear and bold words, mixed with so little of himself that his country, as it went along with him, found nothing but what it recognized as its own. No man in his century had more trust in the collective reason and conscience of his fellow men, or better knew how to take their counsel; and in return he came to be a ruler over the willing in the world of opinion. Born to an independent fortune, he had from his youth been an indefatigable student. "The glow of one warm thought was worth more to him than money." Of a hopeful temperament, and a tranquil, philosophic cast of mind, always temperate in his mode of life, and decorous in his manners, he was a perfect master of his passions. He was of a delicate organization, and fond of elegance; his tastes were refined; laborious in his application to business or the pursuit of knowledge, music, the most spiritual of all pleasures of the senses, was his favorite recreation; and he took a never failing delight in the varied beauty of rural life, building himself a home in the loveliest region of his native state. He was a skillful horseman, and, with elastic step, would roam the mountains on foot. The range of his studies was very wide; he was not unfamiliar with the literature of Greece and Rome; had an

aptitude for mathematics and mechanics, and loved especially the natural sciences, scorning nothing but metaphysics. British governors and officials had introduced into Williamsburg the prevalent free thinking of Englishmen of that century, and Jefferson had grown up in its atmosphere. He was not only a hater of priestcraft and superstition and bigotry and intolerance, he was thought to be indifferent to religion; yet his instincts all inclined him to trace every fact to a general law, and to put faith in ideal truth; the world of the senses did not bound his aspirations, and he believed more than he himself was aware of. He was an idealist in his habits of thought and life, as indeed is everyone who has an abiding and thorough confidence in the people; and he was kept so, in spite of circumstances, by the irresistible bent of his character. He had great power in mastering details, as well as in searching for general principles. His profession was that of the law, in which he was methodical, painstaking, and successful; at the same time, he pursued it as a science, and was well read in the law of nature and of nations. Whatever he had to do, it was his custom to prepare himself for it carefully; and in public life, when others were at fault, they often found that he had already hewed out the way; so that in council, men willingly gave him the lead, which he never appeared to claim, and was always able to undertake. But he rarely spoke in public, and was less fit to engage in the war of debate than calmly to sum up its conclusions. It was a beautiful trait in his character that he was free from envy; had he kept silence, there would have been wanting to John Adams the best witness to his greatness as the ablest advocate and defender of independence. A common object now riveted the two statesmen together in close bonds. I cannot find that at that period Jefferson had an enemy; by the general consent of Virginia,

he stood first among her civilians. Just thirty-three years old, married, and happy in his family, affluent, with a bright career before him, he was no rash innovator by his character or his position. If his convictions drove him to demand independence, it was only because he could no longer live with honor under the British "constitution, which he still acknowledged to be better than all that had preceded it." His enunciation of general principles was fearless; but he was no visionary devotee of abstract theories, which, like disembodied souls, escape from every embrace. The nursling of his country, the offspring of his time, he set about the work of a practical statesman, and his measures grew so naturally out of previous law and the facts of the past that they struck deep root, and have endured.

From the fullness of his own mind, without consulting one single book, yet having in his mind the example of the Swiss and of the United Provinces of the Netherlands, Jefferson drafted the declaration, in which, after citing the primal principles of government, he presented the complaints of the United States against England in the three classes of the iniquitous use of the royal prerogative, the usurpation of legislative power over America by the king in parliament, and the measures for enforcing the pretended acts of legislation. He submitted the paper separately to Franklin and to John Adams, accepted from each of them one or two verbal, unimportant corrections, and on the 28th of June reported it to congress, which now, on the 2d of July, immediately after adopting the resolution of independence, entered upon its consideration. During the remainder of that day, and the next two, the language, the statements, and the principles of the paper were closely scanned.— *Vol. V, Page 322.*

SELECTION XX.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

PART I.

That God rules in the affairs of men is as certain as any truth of physical science. On the great moving power which is from the beginning hangs the world of the senses and the world of thought and action. Eternal wisdom marshals the great procession of the nations, working in patient continuity through the ages, never halting and never abrupt, encompassing all events in its oversight, and ever effecting its will, though mortals may slumber in apathy or oppose with madness.

Kings are lifted up or thrown down, nations come and go, republics flourish and wither, dynasties pass away like a tale that is told; but nothing is by chance, though men, in their ignorance of causes, may think so.

The deeds of time are governed, as well as judged, by the decrees of eternity. The caprice of fleeting existences bends to the immovable omnipotence, which plants its foot on all the centuries and has neither change of purpose nor repose. Sometimes, like a messenger through the thick darkness of night, it steps along its mysterious ways; but when the hour strikes for a people, or for mankind, to pass into a new form of being, unseen hands draw the bolts from the gates of futurity; an all-subduing influence prepares the minds of men for the coming revolution; those who plan resistance find themselves in conflict with the will of Providence rather than with human devices; and all hearts and all understandings, most of all the opinions and influences of the unwilling, are wonderfully attracted and compelled to bear forward the change, which becomes more an obedience to the universal law of nature than submission to the arbitrament of man.

In the fullness of time a republic rose up in the wilderness of America. Thousands of years had passed away before this child of the ages could be born. From whatever there was of good in the systems of former centuries she drew her nourishment; the wrecks of the past were her warnings. With the deepest sentiment of faith fixed in her inmost nature, she disenthralled religion from bondage to temporal power, that her worship might be worship only in spirit and in truth. The wisdom which had passed from India through Greece, with what Greece had added of her own; the jurisprudence of Rome; the mediæval municipalities; the Teutonic method of representation; the political experience of England; the benignant wisdom of the expositors of the law of nature and of nations in France and Holland, all shed on her their selectest influence. She washed the gold of political wisdom from the sands wherever it was found; she cleft it from the rocks; she gleaned it among ruins. Out of all the discoveries of statesmen and sages, out of all the experience of past human life, she compiled a perennial political philosophy, the primordial principles of national ethics. The wise men of Europe sought the best government in a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy; America went behind these names to extract from them the vital elements of social forms, and blend them harmoniously in the free commonwealth, which comes nearest to the illustration of the natural equality of all men. She entrusted the guardianship of established rights to law, the movements of reform to the spirit of the people, and drew her force from the happy reconciliation of both.

Republics had heretofore been limited to small cantons or cities, and their dependencies; America, doing that of which the like had not been known before upon the earth, or believed by kings and statesmen to be possi-

ble, extended her republic across a continent. Under her auspices the vine of liberty took deep root and filled the land; the hills were covered with its shadow, its boughs were like the goodly cedars, and reached unto both oceans. The fame of this only daughter of freedom went out into all the lands of the earth; from her the human race drew hope.

PART II.

When eight years old he floated down the Ohio with his father on a raft, which bore the family and all their possessions to the shore of Indiana; and, child as he was, he gave help as they toiled through dense forests to the interior of Spencer county. There, in the land of free labor, he grew up in a log cabin, with the solemn solitude for his teacher in his meditative hours. Of Asiatic literature he knew only the Bible; of Greek, Latin, and mediæval no more than the translation of Æsop's Fables; of English, John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. The traditions of George Fox and William Penn passed to him dimly along the lines of two centuries through his ancestors, who were Quakers.

Otherwise his education was altogether American. The Declaration of Independence was his compendium of political wisdom, the Life of Washington his constant study, and something of Jefferson and Madison reached him through Henry Clay, whom he honored from boyhood. For the rest, from day to day, he lived the life of the American people, walked in its light, reasoned with its reason, thought with its power of thought, felt the beatings of its mighty heart, and so was in every way a child of nature, a child of the West, a child of America.

At nineteen, feeling impulses of ambition to get on in the world, he engaged himself to go down the Mississippi in a flatboat, receiving ten dollars a month for his

wages, and afterward he made the trip once more. At twenty-one he drove his father's cattle, as the family migrated to Illinois, and split rails to fence in the new homestead in the wild. At twenty-three he was a captain of volunteers in the Black Hawk war. He kept a store. He learned something of surveying, but of English literature added nothing to Bunyan but Shakespeare's plays. At twenty-five he was elected to the legislature of Illinois, where he served eight years. At twenty-seven he was admitted to the bar. In 1837 he chose his home at Springfield, the beautiful center of the richest land in the state. In 1847 he was a member of the National Congress, where he voted about forty times in favor of the principle of the Jefferson proviso. In 1849 he sought eagerly but unsuccessfully the place of commissioner of the land office, and he refused an appointment that would have transferred his residence to Oregon. In 1854 he gave his influence to elect from Illinois to the American senate a democrat who would certainly do justice to Kansas. In 1858, as the rival of Douglas, he went before the people of the mighty Prairie State, saying: "This Union cannot permanently endure half slave and half free; the Union will not be dissolved, but the house will cease to be divided." And now, in 1861, with no experience whatever as an executive officer, while states were madly flying from their orbit, and wise men knew not where to find counsel, this descendant of Quakers, this pupil of Bunyan, this offspring of the great West was elected President of America.

He measured the difficulty of the duty that devolved upon him, and was resolved to fulfill it. As on the eleventh of February, 1861, he left Springfield, which for a quarter of a century had been his happy home, to the crowd of his friends and neighbors, whom he was never more to meet, he spoke a solemn farewell: "I

know not how soon I shall see you again. A duty has devolved upon me, greater than that which has devolved upon any other man since Washington. He never would have succeeded except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon which he at all times relied. On the same Almighty Being I place my reliance. Pray that I may receive that divine assistance, without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is certain." To the men of Indiana he said: "I am but an accidental temporary instrument; it is your business to rise up and protect the Union and liberty." At the capital of Ohio he said: "Without a name, without a reason why I should have a name, there has fallen upon me a task such as did not rest even upon the Father of his Country." At various places in New York, especially at Albany, before the legislature, which tendered him the support of the great Empire State, he said: "While I hold myself the humblest of all the individuals who have ever been elevated to the presidency, I have a more difficult task to perform than any of them. I bring a true heart to the work. I must rely upon the people of the whole country for support, and with their sustaining aid even I, humble as I am, cannot fail to carry the ship of state safely through the storm." To the assembly of New Jersey, at Trenton, he explained: "I shall take the ground I deem most just to the North, the East, the West, the South, and the whole country, in good temper, certainly, with no malice to any section. I am devoted to peace, but it may be necessary to put the foot down firmly." In the old Independence Hall, of Philadelphia, he said: "I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence, which gave liberty, not alone to the people of this country, but to the world in all future time. If the country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I would rather be assassinated on the

spot than surrender it. I have said nothing but what I am willing to live and die by."

PART III.

Hardly had the late President been consigned to the grave when the Prime Minister of England died, full of years and honors. Palmerston traced his lineage to the time of the Conqueror; LINCOLN went back only to his grandfather. Palmerston received his education from the best scholars of Harrow, Edinburgh, and Cambridge; LINCOLN'S early teachers were the silent forest, the prairie, the river, and the stars. Palmerston was in public life for sixty years; LINCOLN for but a tenth of that time. Palmerston was a skillful guide of an established aristocracy; LINCOLN a leader, or rather a companion, of the people. Palmerston was exclusively an Englishman, and made his boast in the House of Commons that the interest of England was his shibboleth; LINCOLN thought always of mankind, as well as his own country, and served human nature itself. Palmerston, from his narrowness as an Englishman, did not endear his country to any one court or to any one nation, but rather caused general uneasiness and dislike; LINCOLN left America more beloved than ever by all the people of Europe. Palmerston was self-possessed and adroit in reconciling the conflicting factions of the aristocracy; LINCOLN, frank and ingenuous, knew how to poise himself on the ever moving opinions of the masses. Palmerston was capable of insolence toward the weak, quick to the sense of honor, not heedful of right; LINCOLN rejected counsel given only as a matter of policy, and was not capable of being willfully unjust.

Palmerston, essentially superficial, delighted in banter, and knew how to divert grave opposition by playful levity; LINCOLN was a man of infinite jest on his lips,

with saddest earnestness at his heart. Palmerston was a fair representative of the aristocratic liberality of the day, choosing for his tribunal, not the conscience of humanity, but the House of Commons; LINCOLN took to heart the eternal truths of liberty, obeyed them as the commands of Providence, and accepted the human race as the judge of his fidelity. Palmerston did nothing that will endure; LINCOLN finished a work which all time cannot overthrow. Palmerston is a shining example of the ablest of a cultivated aristocracy; LINCOLN is the genuine fruit of institutions where the laboring man shares and assists to form the great ideas and designs of his country. Palmerston was buried in Westminster Abbey by the order of his Queen, and was attended by the British aristocracy to his grave, which, after a few years, will hardly be noticed by the side of the graves of Fox and Chatham; LINCOLN was followed by the sorrow of his country across the continent to his resting place in the heart of the Mississippi valley, to be remembered through all time by his countrymen, and by all the people of the world.—*Memorial Address.*

NOTE.—This address was delivered before the two houses of congress, February 12, 1866.

SELECTION XXI.

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

PART I.

THE eternal flow of existence never rests, bearing the human race onward through continuous change. Principles grow into life by informing the public mind, and in their maturity gain the mastery over events; following each other as they are bidden, and ruling without a pause. No sooner do the agitated waves begin to sub-

side, than, amidst the formless tossing of the billows, a new messenger from the Infinite Spirit moves over the waters; and the bark which is freighted with the fortunes of mankind yields to the gentle breath as it first whispers among the shrouds, even while the beholders still doubt if the breeze is springing, and whence it comes, and whither it will go.

The hour of revolution was at hand, promising freedom to conscience and dominion to intelligence. History, escaping from the dictates of authority and the jars of insulated interests, enters upon new and unthought-of domains of culture and equality, the happier society where power springs freshly from ever renewed consent; the life and activity of a connected world.

For Europe, the crisis foreboded the struggles of generations. The strong bonds of faith and affection, which once united the separate classes of its civil hierarchy, had lost their vigor. In the impending chaos of states, the ancient forms of society, after convulsive agonies, were doomed to be broken in pieces, and the fragments to become distinct, and seemingly lifeless, like the dust; ready to be whirled in a deadly sand storm by the tempest of public rage. The voice of reform, as it passed over the desolation, would inspire animation afresh; but in the classes whose power was crushed, as well as in the oppressed who knew not that they were redeemed, it might also awaken wild desires, which the ruins of a former world could not satiate. In America, the influences of time were molded by the creative force of reason, sentiment, and nature; its political edifice rose in lovely proportions, as if to the melodies of the lyre. Peacefully and without crime, humanity was to make for itself a new existence.

A few men of Anglo-Saxon descent, chiefly farmers, planters, and mechanics, with their wives and children,

had crossed the Atlantic, in search of freedom and fortune. They brought the civilization which the past had bequeathed to Great Britain; they were followed by the slave ship and the African; their prosperity invited emigrants from every lineage of central and western Europe; the mercantile system to which they were subjected prevailed in the councils of all metropolitan states, and extended its restrictions to every continent that allured to conquest, commerce, or colonization. The accomplishment of their independence would agitate the globe, would assert the freedom of the oceans as commercial highways, vindicate power in the commonwealth for the united judgment of its people, and assure to them the right to a self-directing vitality.

The authors of the American Revolution avowed for their object the welfare of mankind, and believed that they were in the service of their own and of all future generations. Their faith was just; for the world of mankind does not exist in fragments, nor can a country have an insulated existence. All men are brothers, and all are bondsmen for one another. All nations, too, are brothers, and each one is responsible for that federative humanity which puts the ban of exclusion on none. New principles of government could not assert themselves in one hemisphere without affecting the other. The very idea of the progress of an individual people, in its relation to universal history, springs from the acknowledged unity of the race.— *Vol. III., Page 3.*

PART II.

From the dawn of social being, there has appeared a tendency toward commerce and intercourse between the scattered inhabitants of the earth. That mankind have ever earnestly desired this connection appears from their willing homage to the adventurers, and to every people

who have greatly enlarged the boundaries of the world, as known to civilization. The traditions of remotest antiquity celebrate the half divine wanderer who raised pillars on the shores of the Atlantic; and record, as a visitant from the skies, the first traveler from Europe to the central rivers of Asia. It is the glory of Greece that, when she had gathered on her islands and among her hills the scattered beams of human intelligence, her numerous colonies carried the accumulated light to the neighborhood of the ocean, and to the shores of the Euxine. Her wisdom and her arms connected continents.

When civilization intrenched herself within the beautiful promontory of Italy, and Rome led the van of European reform, the same movement continued, with still vaster results; for, though the military republic bounded the expansive spirit of independence by giving dominion to property, and extended her own influence by the sword, yet, heaping up conquests, adding island to continent, crushing nationalities, offering a shrine to strange gods, and citizenship to every vanquished people, she extended over a larger empire the benefits of fixed principles of law, and a cosmopolitan polytheism prevailed as the religion of the world.

To have asserted clearly the unity of mankind was the distinctive character of the Christian religion. No more were the nations to be severed by the worship of exclusive deities. The world was instructed that all men are of one blood; that for all there is but one divine nature, and but one moral law; and the renovating faith taught the singleness of the race, of which it embodied the aspirations, and guided the advancement. The tribes of northern Europe, emerging freshly from the wild nurseries of nations, opened new regions to culture, commerce, and refinement. The beams of the majestic temple, which antiquity had reared to its many gods, were

already falling in; the roving invaders, taking to their hearts the regenerating creed, became its intrepid messengers, and bore its symbols even to Iceland and Siberia.

Still nearer were the relations of the connected world when an enthusiastic reformer, glowing with selfish ambition, and angry at the hollow forms of idolatry, rose up in the deserts of Arabia, and founded a system, whose emissaries, never diverging widely from the warmer zone, conducted armies from Mecca to the Ganges, where its principle was at variance with the limitation of castes; and to the Ebro, where a life of the senses could mock at degenerate superstitions, yet without the power to create anew. How did the two systems animate all the continents of the Old World to combat for the sepulcher of Christ, till Europe, from Spain to Scandinavia, came into conflict, and intercourse with the arts, as well as the arms, of the South and East, from Morocco to Hindoostan!

In due time appeared the mariner from Genoa. To Columbus God gave the keys that unlock the barriers of the ocean, so that he filled Christendom with his glory. The voice of the world had whispered to him that the world is one; and, as he went forth toward the west, plowing a wave which no European keel had entered, it was his high purpose not merely to open new paths to islands or to continents, but to bring together the ends of the earth, and join all nations in commerce and spiritual life.

While the world of mankind is accomplishing its nearer connection, it is also advancing in the power of its intelligence. The possession of reason is the engagement for that progress of which history keeps the record. The faculties of each individual mind are limited in their development; the reason of the whole strives for perfec-

tion; has been restlessly forming itself from the first moment of human existence, and has never met bounds to its capacity for improvement. The generations of men are not like the leaves on the trees, which fall, and renew themselves without melioration or change; individuals disappear like the foliage and the flowers; the existence of our kind is continuous, and its ages are reciprocally dependent. Were it not so, there would be no great truths inspiring action, no laws regulating human achievements. The movement of the living world would be as the ebb and flow of the ocean; and the mind would no more be touched by the visible agency of Providence in human affairs. — *Vol. III., Page 5.*

PART III.

Institutions may crumble, and governments fall, but it is only that they may renew a better youth, and mount upward like the eagle; the petals of the flower wither that fruit may form. The desire of perfection, springing always from moral power, rules even the sword, and escapes unharmed from the field of carnage; giving to battles all that they can have of luster, and to warriors their only glory; surviving martyrdoms, and safe amid the wreck of states. On the banks of the stream of time, not a monument has been raised to a hero or a nation but tells the tale, and renews the hope of improvement. Each people that has disappeared, every institution that has passed away, has been but a step in the ladder by which humanity ascends toward the perfecting of its nature.

And how has it always been advancing, to the just judgments of the past adding the discoveries of successive ages! The generations that the torch of truth along the lines of time themselves become dust and ashes; but

the light still increases its ever-burning flame, and is fed more and more plenteously with consecrated oil. How is progress manifest in religion, from the gross symbols of the East to the sublime philosophy of Greece, from the fetichism of the savage to the polytheism of Rome; from the multiplied forms of ancient superstition, and the lovely representations of deities in stone, to the clear conception of the unity of divine power, and the idea of the presence of God in the soul! How has mind, in its inquisitive freedom, taught man to employ the elements as mechanics do their tools, and already, in part at least, made him the master and possessor of nature! How has knowledge not only been increased, but diffused! How has morality been constantly tending to subdue the supremacy of brute force, to refine passion, to enrich literature with the varied forms of pure thought and delicate feeling! How has social life been improved, and every variety of toil in the field and in the workshop been ennobled by the willing industry of free men! How has humanity been growing conscious of its unity and watchful of its own development, till public opinion, bursting the bonds of nationality, knows itself to be the spirit of the world in its movement on the tide of thought from generation to generation!

From the intelligence that had been slowly ripening in the mind of cultivated humanity sprung the American Revolution, which was designed to organize social union through the establishment of personal freedom, and thus emancipate the nations from all authority not flowing from themselves.

In the old civilization of Europe, power moved from a superior to inferiors and subjects; a priesthood transmitted a common faith, from which it would tolerate no dissent; the government esteemed itself, by compact or by divine right, invested with sovereignty, dispensing

protection and demanding allegiance. But a new principle, far mightier than the church and state of the middle ages, was forcing itself into activity. Successions of increasing culture and heroes in the world of thought had conquered for mankind the idea of the freedom of the individual; the creative, but long-latent, energy that resides in the collective reason, was next to be revealed. From this the state was to emerge like the fabled spirit of beauty and love out of the foam of the ever troubled ocean. It was the office of America to substitute for hereditary privilege the natural equality of man; for the irresponsible authority of a sovereign, a dependent government emanating from the concord of opinion; and as she moved forward in her high career, the multitudes of every clime gazed toward her example with hopes of untold happiness, and all the nations of the earth sighed to be renewed.

The American Revolution, of which I write the history, essaying to unfold the principles which organized its events, and bound to keep faith with the ashes of its heroes, was most radical in its character, yet achieved with such benign tranquillity that even conservatism hesitated to censure. A civil war armed men of the same ancestry against each other, yet for the advancement of the principles of everlasting peace and universal brotherhood. A new plebeian democracy took its place by the side of the proudest empires. Religion was disenthralled from civil institutions; thought obtained for itself free utterance by speech and by press; industry was commissioned to follow the bent of its own genius; the system of commercial restrictions between states was reprobated and shattered; and the oceans were enfranchised for every peaceful keel. International law was humanized and softened; and a new, milder, and more just maritime code was concerted and enforced. The trade in

slaves was branded and restrained. The language of Bacon and Milton, of Chatham and Washington, became so diffused, that in every zone, and almost in every longitude, childhood lisps the English as its mother tongue. The equality of all men was declared; personal freedom secured in its complete individuality; and common consent recognized as the only just origin of fundamental laws; so that in thirteen separate states, with ample territory for creating more, the inhabitants of each formed their own political institutions. By the side of the principle of the freedom of the individual and the freedom of the separate states, the noblest work of human intellect was consummated in a federative union; and that union put away every motive to its destruction, by insuring to each successive generation the right to better its constitution, according to the increasing intelligence of the living people.

Astonishing deeds, throughout the world, attended these changes. Armies fought in the wilderness for rule over the solitudes which were to be the future dwelling place of millions; navies hunted each other through every sea, engaging in battle now near the region of icebergs, now within the tropics. Inventive art was summoned to make war more destructive, and to signalize sieges by new miracles of ability and daring. Africa was, in part, appropriated by rival nations of white men, and in Asia an adventurous company of British traders planted themselves as masters in the empire of the Great Mogul.

For America, the period abounded in new forms of virtue and greatness. Fidelity to principle pervaded the masses. An unorganized people, of their own free will, suspended commerce by universal assent. Poverty rejected bribes. Heroism, greater than that of chivalry, burst into action from lowly men. Citizens, with their

families, fled from their homes and wealth in towns, rather than yield to oppression. Battalions sprung up in a night from spontaneous patriotism. Where eminent statesmen hesitated, the instinctive action of the multitude revealed the counsels of magnanimity. Youth and genius gave up life freely for the liberties of mankind. A nation without union, without magazines and arsenals, without a treasury, without credit, without government, fought successfully against the whole strength and wealth of Great Britain. An army of veteran soldiers capitulated to insurgent husbandmen.— *Vol. III., Page 8.*

SELECTION XXII.

INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION.

After the sighs and sorrows of centuries, in the dawn of serener days, an Augustine monk, having also a heart of flame, seized on the same great ideas; and he and his followers, with wives and children, restored them to the world. At his bidding, truth leaped over the cloister walls, and challenged every man to make her his guest; aroused every intelligence to acts of private judgment; changed a dependent, recipient people into a reflecting, inquiring people; lifted each human being out of the castes of the middle age, to endow him with individuality,.and summoned man to stand forth as man. The world heaved with the fervent conflict of opinion. The people and their guides recognized the dignity of labor. The oppressed peasantry took up arms for liberty. Men reverenced and exercised the freedom of the soul. The breath of the new spirit moved over the earth. It revived Poland, animated Germany, swayed the North; and the inquisition of Spain could not silence its whispers among the mountains of the peninsula. It invaded

France; and, though bonfires of heretics, by way of warning, were lighted at the gates of Paris, it infused itself into the French mind, and led to unwonted free discussions. Exile could not quench it. On the banks of the Lake of Geneva, Calvin stood forth the boldest reformer of his day; not personally engaging in political intrigues, yet, by promulgating great ideas, forming the seed-plot of revolution; bowing only to the Invisible; acknowledging no sacrament of ordination but the choice of the laity, no patent of nobility but that of the elect of God, with its seals of eternity.

Luther's was still a Catholic religion. It sought to instruct all, to confirm all, to sanctify all; and so, under the shelter of princes, it gave established forms to Protestant Germany and Sweden and Denmark and England. But Calvin taught an exclusive doctrine, which, though it addressed itself to all, rested only on the chosen. Lutheranism was, therefore, not a political party; it included prince and noble and peasant. Calvinism was revolutionary. Wherever it came, it created division. Its symbol, as set up on the "Institutes" of its teacher, was a flaming sword. By the side of the eternal mountains, and perennial snows, and arrowy rivers of Switzerland, it established a religion without a prelate, a government without a king. Fortified by its faith in fixed decrees, it kept possession of its homes among the Alps. It grew powerful in France, and invigorated, between the feudal nobility and the crown, the long contest, which did not end till the subjection of the nobility, through the central despotism, prepared the ruin of that despotism by promoting the equality of the commons. It entered Holland, inspiring an industrious nation with heroic enthusiasm; enfranchising and uniting provinces, and making burghers and weavers and artisans victors of the highest orders of Spanish chivalry, the power of

the inquisition, and the pretended majesty of kings. It penetrated Scotland, and, while its whirlwind bore along persuasion among glens and mountains, it shrank from no danger, and hesitated at no ambition; it nerved its rugged but hearty envoy to resist the flatteries of the beautiful Queen Mary; it assumed the education of her only son; it divided the nobility; it penetrated the masses, overturned the ancient ecclesiastical establishment, planted the free parochial school, and gave a living energy to the principle of liberty in a people. It infused itself into England, and placed its plebeian sympathies in daring resistance to the courtly hierarchy; dissenting from dissent, longing to introduce the reign of righteousness, it invited every man to read the Bible, and made itself dear to the common mind by teaching, as a divine revelation, the unity of the race, and the natural equality of man. It claimed for itself freedom of utterance, and through the pulpit, in eloquence imbued with the authoritative words of prophets and apostles, spoke to the whole congregation. It sought new truth, denying the sanctity of the continuity of tradition. It stood up against the middle age, and its forms in church and state, hating them with a fierce and unquenchable hatred.

Imprisoned, maimed, oppressed at home, its independent converts in Great Britain looked beyond the Atlantic for a better world. Their energetic passion was nurtured by trust in the divine protection, their power of will was safely intrenched in their own vigorous creed; and under the banner of the gospel, with the fervid and enduring love of the myriads who in Europe adopted the stern simplicity of the disciples of Calvin, they sailed for the wilderness, far away from "popery and prelacy," from the traditions of the church, from hereditary power, from the sovereignty of an earthly king,—from all

dominion but the Bible, and "what rose from natural reason and the principles of equity."—*History, Vol. III., Page 99.*

SELECTION XXIII.

THE ACADIANS.

The tenth of September was the day for the embarkation of a part of the exiles. They were drawn up six deep; and the young men, one hundred and sixty-one in number, were ordered to march first on board the vessel. They could leave their farms and cottages, the shady rocks on which they had reclined, their herds and their garners; but nature yearned within them and they would not be separated from their parents. Yet of what avail was the frenzied despair of the unarmed youth; they had not one weapon; the bayonet drove them to obey; and they marched slowly and heavily from the chapel to the shore, between women and children, who kneeling prayed for blessings on their heads, they themselves weeping and praying and singing hymns. The seniors went next; the wives and children must wait till other transport vessels arrive. The delay had its horrors. The wretched people left behind were kept together near the sea, without proper food or raiment or shelter, till other ships came to take them away; and December, with its appalling cold, had struck the shivering, half-clad, broken-hearted sufferers, before the last of them were removed. "The embarkation of the inhabitants goes on but slowly," wrote Monckton, from Fort Cumberland, near which he had burned three hamlets; "the most part of the wives of the men we have prisoners are gone off with their children, in hopes I would not send off their husbands without them." Their hope was vain. Near Annapolis, a hundred heads of families fled to the woods, and a

party was detached on the hunt to bring them in. "Our soldiers hate them," wrote an officer on this occasion, "and if they can but find a pretext to kill them, they will." Did a prisoner seek to escape, he was shot down by the sentinel. Yet some fled to Quebec; more than three thousand had withdrawn to Miramachi and the region south of the Ristigouche; some found rest on the banks of the St. John's and its branches; some found a lair in their native forests; some were charitably sheltered from the English in the wigwams of the savages. But seven thousand of these banished people were driven on board ships, and scattered among the English colonies, from New Hampshire to Georgia; one thousand and twenty to South Carolina alone. They were cast ashore without resources; hating the poorhouse as a shelter for their offspring, and abhorring the thought of selling themselves as laborers. Households, too, were separated, the colonial newspapers containing advertisements of members of families seeking their companions, of sons anxious to reach and relieve their parents, of mothers moaning for their children.

The wanderers sighed for their native country; but to prevent their return, their villages, from Annapolis to the isthmus, were laid waste. Their old homes were but ruins. In the district of Minas, for instance, two hundred and fifty of their houses, and more than as many barns, were consumed. The live stock which belonged to them, consisting of great numbers of horned cattle, hogs, sheep, and horses, were seized as spoils and disposed of by the English officials. A beautiful and fertile tract of country was reduced to a solitude. There was none left round the ashes of the cottages of the Acadians but the faithful watch-dog, vainly seeking the hands that fed him. Thickets of forest trees choked

their orchards; the ocean broke over their neglected dikes, and desolated their meadows.

Relentless misfortune pursued the exiles wherever they fled. Those sent to Georgia, drawn by a love for the spot where they were born as strong as that of the captive Jews who wept by the rivers of Babylon, for their own temple and land, escaped to sea in boats, and went coasting from harbor to harbor; but, when they had reached New England, just as they would have set sail for their native fields, they were stopped by orders from Nova Scotia. Those who dwelt on the St. John's were torn from their new homes. When Canada surrendered, hatred with its worst venom pursued the fifteen hundred who remained south of the Ristigouche. Once those who dwelt in Pennsylvania presented a humble petition to the Earl of Loudoun, then the British commander in chief in America; and the cold-hearted peer, offended that the prayer was made in French, seized their five principal men, who in their own land had been persons of dignity and substance, and shipped them to England, with the request that they might be kept from ever becoming troublesome by being consigned to service as common sailors on board ships of war. No doubt existed of the king's approbation. The lords of trade, more merciless than the savages and than the wilderness in winter, wished very much that every one of the Acadians should be driven out; and, when it seemed that the work was done, congratulated the king that "the zealous endeavors of Lawrence had been crowned with an entire success." "We did," said Edmund Burke, "in my opinion, most inhumanly, and upon pretenses that in the eye of an honest man are not worth a farthing, root out this poor, innocent, deserving people, whom our utter inability to govern, or to reconcile, gave us no sort of right to extirpate." I know not if the annals

of the human race keep the record of sorrows so wantonly inflicted, so bitter, and so perennial, as fell upon the French inhabitants of Acadia. "We have been true," they said of themselves, "to our religion and true to ourselves; yet nature appears to consider us only as the objects of public vengeance." The hand of the English official seemed under a spell with regard to them, and was never uplifted but to curse them.—*History, Vol. III., Page 133.*

SELECTION XXIV.

WESLEY AND THE REVOLUTION.

THE pure-minded man, who in a sensual age became the quickener of religious fervor, the preacher to the poor, John Wesley, also came forward to defend the system of the court with the usual arguments. He looked so steadily toward the world beyond the skies, that he could not brook the interruption of devout gratitude by bloody contests in this stage of being. Besides, he saw that the rupture between the English and the Americans was growing wider every day, and to him the total defection of America was the evident prelude of a conspiracy against monarchy, of which the bare thought made him shudder. "No governments under heaven," said he, "are so despotic as the republican; no subjects are governed in so arbitrary a manner as those of a commonwealth. The people never but once in all history gave the sovereign power, and that was to Masaniello of Naples. Our sins will never be removed, till we fear God and honor the king." Wesley's mental constitution was not robust enough to gaze on the future with unblenched calm. He could not foresee that the constellation of republics, so soon to rise in the wilds of America,

would welcome the members of the society which he was to found as the pioneers of religion; that the breath of liberty would waft their messages to the masses of the people; would encourage them to collect the white and the negro, slave and master, in the greenwood, for counsel on divine love and full assurance of grace; and would carry their consolation and songs and prayers to the furthest cabins in the wilderness. To the gladdest of glad tidings for the political regeneration of the world, Wesley listened with timid trembling, as to the fearful bursting of the flood-gates of revolution, and he knew not that God was doing a work which should lead the nations of the earth to joy.— *Vol. IV., Page 494.*

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

BIOGRAPHY.

1. What other great historians have been educated at Harvard?
2. What distinguished poets?
3. What special advantages for study did Bancroft enjoy after graduating at Harvard?
4. What experience did he have as a teacher?
5. What government positions has he held?
6. What literary man did he befriend?
7. What memorial addresses has he delivered?
8. Does he believe firmly in the Christian religion?
9. What evidence is there of this?
10. From what event does he think the revolution sprang?

SELECTION I.

1. Why does he use the expression *Milton and Hampden?*
2. When was Milton born?
3. Was it possible for him to see Shakespeare?
4. At what college did he graduate?
5. How many years did he spend in study as a preparation for his work?
6. How many years of his life were spent in political strife?
7. What relation did he sustain to Cromwell?
8. What political pamphlets did he write?
9. How often was he married?
10. How did he treat his daughters?

11. When did he write "Paradise Lost?"

12. What part did Hampden have in the English revolution?

13. Was he a champion of liberty as well as a vigorous writer and speaker?

14. What do you think of Bancroft's tribute to the English language?

15. In what does its beauty consist?

SELECTION II.

1. Give an estimate of this selection?

2. Is it a fine description?

3. Point out the participles.

4. What word has its plural in *a*?

5. It is derived from what language?

6. Why do the adjectives *majestic* and *free* follow *forests*?

7. Is there any objection to the word *relation* as used in last sentence?

SELECTION III.

1. Give the pronunciation of *Geneose* and *Genoa*.

2. Who is meant by the "Augustine monk"?

3. Who was the "French refugee"?

4. Give the pronunciation of *Augustine*, *inquiries*, *enfranchisement*.

5. Give the meaning of the words *indulgences*, *schism*, *proselyte*.

6. Are the sentences strong and elegant?

SELECTION IV.

1. When did the Reformation commence?

2. What caused it?

3. What rendered its growth rapid?

4. What was the burden of Luther's preaching?

SELECTION V.

1. Give the main facts in the life of Luther.
2. Give the main facts in the life of Calvin.
3. Which was the more radical reformer?
4. Did Luther always believe in transubstantiation?
5. In a literary point of view, what is the most noticeable thing about this selection?
6. Compare it with Johnson's parallel between Pope and Dryden; also with Pope's parallel between Homer and Virgil.
7. What is meant by "parity of the clergy"?

SELECTION VI.

1. Why is the first sentence of this selection strong?
2. How many subordinate clauses in it?
3. Would the sentence be as strong if the principal clause came first?
4. Is the sense suspended until near the close?
5. Give the main facts in the lives of the men mentioned in the selection.
6. Give the meaning of *plenitude*, *harbinger*, *precursor*.
7. Give the pronunciation of *lenity* and *lenient*.
8. Is the last sentence strong? Why?
9. Is it *loose* or *periodic?*

NOTE.—In a *loose* sentence there may be a grammatic close at one or more places before the end. In a *periodic* sentence the sense is suspended till near the end.

SELECTION VII.

1. Give main facts in life of Penn.
2. Give main facts in life of Locke.
3. How did they differ in their views of the soul?
4. How did they differ in their views of government?
5. Is the parallel well sustained?

SELECTION VIII.

1. How does Bancroft's estimate of Penn differ from Macaulay's estimate of him?
2. Which is more nearly right?

SELECTION IX.

1. What does Bancroft say of the religious character of the early colonists?
2. Notice his noble and discriminating tribute to the Christian religion.
3. Who was the "Newgate prisoner"?
4. Point out all the participles in the selection.

SELECTION X.

1. Point out all the figures of speech in this selection.
2. Where and when did the Puritans have their origin?
3. Define *tiffany*, *superficial*, *scion*, *criterion*, *arrogance*, *infallible*, *subservient*, *laity*.
4. Is the parallel between Puritanism and chivalry well sustained?
5. Give an estimate of the literary value of this selection.

SELECTION XI.

1. When was Cromwell born?
2. Where was he educated?
3. Did he ever meet Charles I. in his boyhood?
4. How did he gain his first military renown?
5. Was he a blessing to the English people?
6. What did he accomplish for the nation?
7. When did he die?
8. What became of his body?

SELECTION XII.

1. When did Hudson make his explorations?
2. He was a native of what country?
3. What nation claimed the lands he discovered?
4. Define *sedgy*, *wanton*, *progeny*, *yeoman*.
5. Is this a good description?

SELECTION XIII.

1. Give the main facts in the life of Franklin.
2. State some interesting facts in his boyhood.
3. What part did he have in framing the Declaration of Independence?
4. Where was he during the most of the revolutionary war?
5. What part did he take in the convention that drew up the Constitution of the United States?
6. What are some of his discoveries in science?
7. Does Bancroft do justice to him?

SELECTION XIV.

1. How many men were killed in the battle of Lexington?
2. Why do we still regard it as an event of great importance?
3. Was Ralph Waldo Emerson related to William Emerson?
4. Is Longfellow's "Paul Revere" essentially correct in a historical point of view?
5. Is there any objection to the expression, *the grass growing rankly?*
5. Point out the longest sentence in the selection.
7. Is it clear?

SELECTION XV.

1. Give the main facts in the early life of Washington.

2. Compare his boyhood with the boyhood of some of our other great men.

3. Were the circumstances surrounding his boyhood calculated to develop him into a great man?

4. What do you think of the description given of Washington's appearance?

5. Give reasons for the various marks of punctuation in the selection.

6. *His dark blue eyes*, etc. Why is one relative clause in this sentence separated by commas, and the other not?

7. *Braddock selected him as an aid.* State the case of *aid*, and give reason.

8. Point out the compound words.

9. Is there any objection to the sentence beginning "Profoundly impressed with confidence in God's providence"? What does the participle belong to?

10. Mention six characteristics of Washington as revealed in this selection.

11. Give pronunciation of *disastrous*, *vehement*, and *exemplary*.

12. Give meaning of *prodigal*, *parsimonious*, *emolument*, *attenuated*.

13. What is the case of *head* in the last sentence of the selection?

14. Give your estimate of the literary value of the selection.

SELECTION XVI.

1. When and where was Adams born?

2. Where was he educated?

3. Name some of his descendants.

4. How was he connected with the "Boston Massacre"?

5. State his connection with "Declaration of Independence."

6. Where was he during the revolutionary war?

7. What offices of trust did he hold?

8. How many electoral votes did he have when Jefferson was first chosen?

9. What political party did Adams belong to?

10. When did he die?

11. Who delivered the great oration on his life and character?

12. Who was president at that time?

13. What do you think of this selection as a character study?

14. What faults in Adams are pointed out?

15. What virtues are praised?

16. Has Bancroft aimed to be fair?

17. What does he say was Adams' greatest fault?

18. Have you any objection to the expression, "It laid open how deeply his self-love was wounded"?

19. What is said of Adams' religious character?

20. Did he ever think of entering the ministry?

SELECTION XVII.

1. Notice the use of participles in the third sentence.

2. Would the sentence be as elegant if the participial phrases were expanded into clauses?

SELECTION XVIII.

1. Point out the strong points of this selection.

2. Define *oracles*, *litanies*, *atrophied*.

SELECTION XIX.

1. Give main facts in the early life of Jefferson.
2. What great speech probably first animated him?
3. How old was he when he wrote the "Declaration of Independence"?
4. Who else were on the committee to draft it?
5. Where was he during the revolutionary war?
6. What were his relations with Aaron Burr?
7. When did he die?

SELECTION XX.

1. Give the important facts in Lincoln's life.
2. What do you think of the parallel between Lincoln and Palmerston?
3. Does this address reveal Bancroft's faith in the Deity?

SELECTION XXI.

1. Do you consider this selection philosophical?
2. Point out the beauties of rhetoric found in it.
3. Classify the rhetorical figures in it.

SELECTION XXII.

1. What nations did the Reformation influence most?
2. Point out the participles that have the force of an adjective and verb.
3. Point out the similes and metaphors.

SELECTION XXIII.

1. Give an account of the Acadians.
2. Where can some of them be found now?
3. Has Longfellow exaggerated the sufferings of the Acadians in his "Evangeline"?

SELECTION XXIV.

1. How many times did Wesley visit America?

2. What was his influence as one of the pioneer preachers of the land?

3. What has been his influence on the religious thought of the country?

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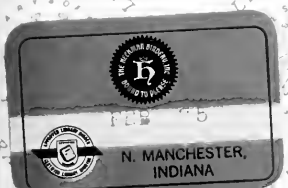
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